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BIOGRAPHY.

The following sketch of the life and character of the Rev. Dr. GEORGE DUFFIELD, *late minister of the second Presbyterian church in the city of Philadelphia (born October, 1732, and who died February 2d, 1790) is taken from his funeral sermon, preached by the Rev. Dr. Green.*—Gen. Assem. Mag.

FUNERAL panegyric has been so much abused, that it has, in a measure, defeated its own design. Extravagant and misapplied encomium, by its frequency and fallacy, has rendered even the truth suspicious. The truth, however, ought to be told; and, on the present occasion, it is our intention to be governed by it, in its rigorous strictness. And, indeed, so much may be said, without going beyond its bounds, that there is little temptation to transgress.

As a man, the reverend doctor Duffield possessed a vigorous, active, firm, and benevolent mind. He thought with energy and quickness; and he dreaded not the labour of thinking. In promptitude of conception, and readiness of utterance, few were his equals. These qualities, in early life, enabled him to preach with a frequency, of which the instances are rare: and throughout life, they gave him a consequence and utility in deliberative bodies, to which few can attain.

To the opinions which he formed, he adhered with steadiness. He was neither frightened from them by the number of his opponents, nor soothed by the respectability of their characters or stations. His behaviour, indeed, was at the farthest remove from disrespect: but he was, in an eminent degree, a man of an undaunted spirit. The firmness of his mind

was a leading trait, a prominent feature of his whole character. It enabled him, in all the viciſſitudes, and under the ſevereſt trials of life (and he was familiar with them) to maintain an equanimity of conduct, which ſeemed to flow from the fortitude of the philoſopher, mingled with the patience and reſignation of the chriſtian.

His kindneſs and benevolence were great and extenſive. They were the ornament of his other virtues. As a huſband, a father, a brother, a maſter, and a friend, he was ſingularly indulgent, tender and affectionate. But his benevolence was not confined to theſe limits. It led him to be, in a peculiar manner, the friend of the friendleſs. He eſpouſed their cauſe, and advanced their intereſt, with the warmeſt zeal. In his death, the afflicted, the diſtreſſed, and the poor, have loſt one of their beſt friends and counſellors, and one of their warmeſt advocates and moſt conſtant viſitors. It was this part of his character, which led him to connect himſelf with the various humane inſtitutions in Philadelphia, and which rendered him one of their moſt active, attentive, and valuable members. It was his benevolent temper of mind, likewiſe, which rendered him ſo highly eſteemed by almoſt all denominations of chriſtians; and which diſpoſed him to unite an extenſive charity for thoſe who differed from him in matters of faith or opinion, with an earneſt contention for what he eſteemed the truth.

As a ſcholar, he was conſiderably diſtinguiſhed. He early diſcovered a thirſt for knowledge, which led him to the purſuit of liberal ſcience. In his academical courſe, he roſe above moſt of his fellows; and was afterwards employed as a tutor, in the ſeminary which was the nurſe of his juvenile ſtudies. His knowlede was more of the ſolid, than of the ornamental or poliſhed kind. He was accurate in claſſic learning: and he loved philoſophy in all its branches. For theſe reaſons, he was elected a member of the Philoſophical Society, in Philadelphia, of which he was a diligent attendant, and a uſeful member.

As a citizen, he was highly diſtinguiſhed for public ſpirit, and the love of liberty, and for the promotion of every deſign, which had for its object the general welfare. No one was a more zealous and active patriot than he; or in the ſmaller diviſions of ſociety, more ſincerely endeavoured to do ſervice to the community. In the late ſtruggle for liberty in America, he was an early, a decided, and a uniform friend to his country: and ſince the peace he has been equally aſſiduous, in uſing all his influence to advance the public intereſt and tranquility.

As a christian, he ſhone conſpicuouſly. He lived the religion which he profeſſed. The ſpirit of the goſpel ſeemed to have tinctured his whole mind, and to poſſeſs a conſtant and powerful influence on his heart. He was, truly and remarkably, an example of the life of God in the ſoul of man. His "fellowſhip with the Father of his ſpirit," and his "converſation with Heaven," appeared to be almoſt uninterrupted. Nor was he leſs diſtinguiſhed in active duty. He ſought all occaſions of ſerving his Lord. Of him it may be ſaid with truth, that he "went about doing good."

As a divine, he was thoroughly acquainted with the moſt approved ſyſtems of Calviniſtic divinity. He was a warm admirer and advocate of the doctrines of grace. He was ever ready to plead for, and defend them in public and private. Deſcended from pious parents, "from a child he had known the Holy Scriptures:" and he improved his early acquaintance with them, into a familiarity ſeldom acquired. He read them in their original languages, of which he was no unſkilful maſter. In eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, his knowledge, if not minute, was comprehenſive; and in the government and diſcipline of the Preſbyterian church, I believe he hath not left a ſuperior, in an acquaintance with all its parts. He was honoured for theſe accompliſhments with the degree of Doctor in Divinity.

As a preacher of the goſpel, he was indefatigable, evangelical, and ſucceſsful. He was "a workman that needed not to

be aſhamed, rightly dividing the word of life." In the early part of his miniſtry, while his imagination retained its fervour, he was remarkably animated in his public addreſſes, and unuſually popular. An intimation that he was to preach, was the ſure ſignal of a crouded auditory. His manner was always warm and forcible, and his inſtructions always practical. He had a talent of touching the conſcience, and ſeizing the heart, almoſt peculiar to himſelf. He dwelt much on the great, plain and eſſential truths of the goſpel. Yet he was maſter of a ſingularly happy method of explaining Scripture, which in more advanced life, he frequently practiſed.

His firſt ſettlement in the goſpel miniſtry, was at the town of Carliſle, Pennſylvania. Here he was abundant in labours. His natural activity and induſtry enabled him, not only to feed the flock of which he was the immediate overſeer, but to water the vacant parts of his Lord's vineyard, to which he was contiguous, in almoſt an incredible degree.

Theſe circumſtances marked him out as one properly and peculiarly qualified for planting and organizing churches, in places deſtitute of the regular adminiſtration of goſpel ordinances. To this important buſineſs he was therefore called and appointed by the Synod of New-York and Philadelphia; and, in company with the late reverend Mr. Beatty, ſpent a year, in viſiting the frontiers of the country, to preach the word of life to thoſe who were periſhing for "lack of knowledge;" and to form them into congregations for the ſtated reception and ſupport of the goſpel. A printed memorial of this tour has been given to the world; and is a monument of his zeal and labour in the cauſe of Chriſt, and for the good of ſouls. During his reſidence at Carliſle, his miniſtry, through the effuſion and application of the divine ſpirit, was made effectual to turn many "from darkneſs to light and from the power of Satan unto God." But his talents drew him at length into a more public ſphere; and placed him as the paſtor of this flock. Here, my brethren, you have been witneſſes, both of his reſpectability and fidelity, in his ſacred of-

fice. You have ſeen him poſſeſs a diſtinguiſhed weight and influence, in all the judicatories of the church to which he belonged. You have ſeen him happily unite "the wiſdom of the ſerpent with the harmleſſneſs of the dove," in the management of all its concerns and intereſts. You have ſeen him called, by the ſupreme council of the nation, to officiate as one of their chaplains, during the whole of their reſidence in Philadelphia. But, what he was more ſolicitous about than for all earthly honours, and you ſhould remember with more care and pleaſure, you have ſeen him "inſtant in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon," to promote your ſpiritual and eternal welfare. He has truly "watched for you," as one that had the charge of ſouls. He has broken unto you the "bread of life." He has been to you a faithful and an "able miniſter of the New Teſtament." It was his zeal to do good, that expoſed him to the diſeaſe, by which he has been called from you. Such was the man over whom we lament, and whoſe deceaſe is a loſs, not to you only, but to the whole church of Chriſt.

The Rev. Mr. Kicherer's Narrative of his Miſſion to the Hottentots.

(Continued from page 23.)

HAVING continued at the Great River about ten months, and finding that the produce of the land was inſufficient for the ſupport of our numerous cattle, we thought it expedient to ſeparate. We began to remove in the month of March, 1802. The river being then low, we took the favorable opportunity of croſſing it; but as we could not at that time paſs the deſart, we erected ſheds of branches for a temporary reſidence, till we ſhould be able to purſue our journey to Zak river. Here we celebrated the New Year; when all my people came to dine with me, and I preached to them on the parable of the Barren Fig-Tree. I was much indiſpoſed in bo-

dy at this time, owing, I conceive, to the want of bread; nor was I more comfortable in my mind.

I ſhould have remarked, that in the month of January, the Engliſh Commiſſioners, returning from the Bootſuannas, requeſted me to aſſiſt them in procuring cattle; I therefore accompanied them to the Kraal of Cornelius Cock, by whom we were kindly received. Immediately I embraced the opportunity of preaching, and teaching the people, which I continued from morning to night.

My poor people, at home, were in the mean time in much danger of being deprived of all their property, by a Boſcheman free-booter of great fame, whoſe name is Courakakoup. Providence, however, ſeaſonably interpoſed, and prevented this miſchief. About this time, General Dundas, the Britiſh Governor of the Cape, was pleaſed to make me a preſent of 100l. in reward of my ſervices, and offered to promote me to the living at Rodezand, where Mr. Voſs had been miniſter; this generous offer however I thought it right to decline.

Some of the Boſchemen of the country about Zak river, who expreſſed a deſire for our return to that neighborbood, having miſchievouſly given us falſe information, that conſiderable rain had fallen in the wilderneſs, (a circumſtance which alone could enable us to paſs it,) we broke up our encampment, and commenced our journey. We had not proceeded far, before we were convinced that the Boſchemen had deceived us.—We travelled till the third day without finding a drop of water. Our cattle then began to be in the utmoſt diſtreſs; their looks indicated extreme anguiſh, and their piteous lowing ſeemed to forbode our deſtruction in the wilderneſs. At length we found a very ſmall pool, juſt ſufficient to aſſuage our own thirſt, but not that of our animals. A girl was juſt going to drink, when, to our great mortification, we perceived that it had been poiſoned by the Boſchemen, for we diſcovered many heads of ſerpents ſwimming in it. I know it is commonly reported that the venom of ſerpents may be ſwallowed without danger, but our experience leads

s to believe the contrary. Water thus poiſoned will ſoon auſe a perſon who has drank it to become ſo giddy that he annot walk upright, and if an antidote be not ſpeedily admi- iſtered, he will certainly expire in a few hours. It is, howe- er, true, that Boſchemen, being properly prepared, will drink e poiſoned water without prejudice to their health. We were reatly diſtreſſed on the ſight of theſe ſerpents' heads, and new not what courſe to take. I deliberated in my own mind, whether I ſhould call the people together for a public prayer- meeting on this occaſion, to implore of God a ſupply of rain; but having weighed the matter fully, I reſolved to apply in private prayer to our Saviour, and being ſupported in this by my Brother Scholtz, we earneſtly intreated his help in this time of need. The Lord graciouſly heard the voice of our ſupplication, granting us, in the courſe of a few hours, ſuch "ſhowers of bleſſings," as put a period to our diſtreſs. We praiſed the name of Chriſt, and ſtayed two days at this place to recruit our cattle.

On the morning which was fixed for our departure, one of the cows came home with an arrow ſticking in her flank. We immediately concluded that the Boſchemen had driven away part of our held. In theſe caſes they oblige the cattle to run as faſt as they can, and when any of them is unable to keep up with the reſt, they pierce it with a dart; in conſequence of which it falls on the road, and the carcas is fetched away by the robbers on the following day. The cow which returned to us had been thus treated, and ſerved as a meſſenger to ap- prize us of what had happened. I diſpatched ſome Hotten- tots with fire-arms to purſue the track of the banditti, and in the mean time travelled on with the remainder of the Car- avan. On the next day, my people joined us with ſeventy- three out of eighty oxen which had been ſtolen from us. They had happily fallen in with the robbers, at the diſtance of a long day's journey beyond the hills, and recovered the pro- perty; but two of our horſes had been killed by the fatigue.

Leaving my flock under the care of Brother Scholtz, I haſtened forward, towards the reſidence of the neareſt farmers, partly that I might gratify my extreme longing for a morſel of bread, having been without this kind of food for half a year. I ſtopped on the road only a ſingle night, urging my journey with all poſſible diſpatch, in company with three of the beſt of my people, Cornelius and James de Trees, and John Kotze, whoſe converſation was ſingularly ſpiritual and pleaſant; happier hours than theſe I ſcarcely ever ſpent. At length I came within ſight of the firſt farmers houſe, my joy on approaching which was inexpreſſible. My firſt requeſt was for a piece of bread, which I immediately devoured with the keeneſt appetite. It is difficult to conceive of the gratification I enjoyed, when taſting once more this long-miſſed article of food.—Shortly after this, I arrived in ſafety at my home near Zak river. I rejoiced exceedingly when I regained the favored ſpot, where the Lord had ſhown me ſo many wonders of his grace and goodneſs. My dear Cornelius was overjoyed, and ſaid, "O Sir! what happy times have we "formerly had here! This little houſe, could it ſpeak, would "tell us what thouſands of gracious words have here been "ſpoken in it, and how good the Lord has here been to us "poor Hottentots!"

A convenient opportunity preſenting itſelf at this time for a viſit to the Cape, I gladly embraced it, as I had conceived a plan of forming a regular congregation of Hottentots, for which purpoſe I ſtood in need of a variety of articles, and particularly a good ſtock of clothes. Nothing very remarkably happened on this journey, but, wherever I had opportunity, I preached to the people who collected at different places as before, and I humbly truſt "the Lord gave teſtimony to the word of his grace."

When I arrived at Cape-Town, I received the money from the honorable Governor, which he had before promiſed to give me; and which I immediately laid out in the purchaſe of clothing, and needful utenſils for our ſettlement. Here

alſo I received the repeated offer of the church at Rodezand, which, for the ſake of my poor people at Zak River, I thought it my duty to decline.

As ſoon as I could diſpatch my buſineſs at the Cape, I haſtened back to my ſituation in the wilderneſs; when I informed my people, that I had refuſed the living at Rodezand; and aſſured them that I would never forſake them, provided they ſhould diſcover a ſpirit of induſtry, and would be more diligent than they had formerly been in cultivating the ground, and in other uſeful employments; but I told them that if they ſhould hereafter grieve me, as they had done, by their idleneſs, they might depend on it, I would leave them, and accept of the Church at Rodezand. The people, in reply, promiſed me every thing I could deſire, and aſſured me that I ſhould have no cauſe to complain. I therefore immediately ſet about the erection of a more commodious building for a church, to aſſiſt me in which, the farmers lent me two ſlaves, one a Carpenter, and the other a Maſon. The Hottentots began at firſt to help forward the good work; but their natural indolence ſoon made them weary of the labor.* I then repeated my former declaration, adding, that I would certainly leave them in the courſe of eight days, if I did not ſee an increaſe of their diligence. A ſcene enſued, which I cannot recollect without much emotion. They began to weep, and entreat me ſo importunately, that my heart melted within me; I then gave them my word that I would not deſert them. The joy

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* *Mr. Kicherer, in converſation on this ſubject, informed us, that before he left the ſettlement, he had prevailed on the Hottentots to work two hours in the day, which he conſidered as a great point gained with people who, in their heathen ſtate, never worked at all; and he hoped ſhortly to get them to work three hours in a day, and hereafter four; and ſo leading them on by degrees to a life of activity and induſtry becoming chriſtians.*

occaſioned by this promiſe was exceſſive. Many of them claſped their arms round my neck; and I was convinced that they loved me far more than I had imagined. Juſt at this critical moment, the clerk of the church at Rodezand, arrived at our ſettlement with a ſecond invitation. Had he come eight days ſooner, I know not what I might have done; but now his labor proved in vain. In this matter I clearly ſaw the finger of God.

I continued about ten months at Zak river, during which time I formed a regular ſettlement, Mr. Scholtz proving very helpful to me. This ſpot is ſituated in an elevated valley ſurrounded by barren moutains, without a ſingle tree to enliven the proſpect. The Zak river is, in the dry ſeaſon, a ſmall brook which deſcends into the Fiſh river, which latter is ſuppoſed to loſe itſelf in a plain near the mountains; both of theſe rivers produce a plenty of good fiſh, of which, however, the Hottentots are not very fond, nothing but mutton, wild cattle and milk ſuiting their palates.

Beſides our church, which is capable of containing eight hundred people,* we have a good dwelling houſe, conſiſting of ſeveral rooms on one floor, the whole being built of ſtone. Nearly oppoſite the door of the houſe is the fountain, or ſpring, which ſupplies ourſelves and our cattle with water. We have a good garden, incloſed, for our more tender vegetables, and garden ground adjoining it for more hardy plants. Before our houſe, the baptized Hottentots have built themſelves decent habitations, in the farmers' ſtyle; and at the back of it the Heathen live in ſmall huts. We have alſo a cattle yard, ſurrounded with a high wall, behind the houſe of the chriſtian Hottentots; and, on the north ſide of the river which is about three quarters of a mile diſtant, are our

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* *The dimentions of the church are about sixty feet by thirty, which would be insufficient for* 800 *people, accommodated in the European manner; but the Hottentots sit squatted on the ground very close together. The baptized sit on planks laid across stones.*

Corn fields.* The country round about us produces few plants, ſpontaneouſly, though it is well ſupplied with ſweet and fertilizing ſprings. The heat, in the day time, is very great, and the cold of the night is very piercing. In the winter there are ſharp dry froſts, which prove very deſtructive to the vegetables. We have no ſnow there, but it is viſible on the tops of the diſtant mountains a great part of the year. In the ſummer months, from January to April, we have powerful rains, frequently attended with terrible ſtorms of thunder and lightning, which are ſome times deſtructive both to men and beaſts. The country produces little graſs, but the cattle crop the tops of the low buſhes. Unſeaſonable rains often produce unfruitful ſeaſons. Shortly after the rainy ſeaſon, the winter commences, when the crops are often deſtroyed. In the dry ſeaſon, we are obliged to water our garden plants every day.

Amidſt a variety of difficulties, we have been able to perſevere in forming a chriſtian ſettlement, in this unpromiſing ſpot; and ſmall as the beginning may ſeem, yet, all the circumſtances conſidered, I truſt it will appear that much has been done, and that there is reaſon to hope with the bleſſing of God that much more will yet be effected.

While we were diligently employed in our attempts to civilize the people, we had the ſatisfaction to find that the work of the Lord proſpered in our hands. An inſtance or two of the power of divine grace on the hearts of the people may be here mentioned.

James Scheffer, a converted Hottentot, and who had become a very circumſpect character, one day he told me, that he found himſelf to be one of the greateſt of all ſinners, and that as ſuch he daily turned to the Lord Jeſus, for that God,

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* *The Indian corn flourishes exceedingly, and grows to a great size: the Hottentots are very fond of this, especially when it is parched.*

viewed out of Chriſt, appeared to him as a conſuming fire. Now, he ſaid, his earneſt deſire was not merely to be delivered from the puniſhment of his ſin, but he longed to enjoy communion with God, and to be more intimately acquainted with that good Being who had ſo long borne with him; but how to obtain this communion he knew not. I then aſked him what he underſtood by fellowſhip or communion with God. He replied, "Sometimes when I have been engaged in pray-"er, I have had a ſweet feeling, ſuch as I cannot deſcribe; "it was juſt as if God was no longer my enemy, and then I "felt inexpreſſible love to the Lord Jeſus. But I want to be "certainly aſſured of this, that God is no longer my enemy: "I want to be enabled to ſay to him—"My Father:" but to "do this I have never yet found liberty." In anſwer to him, I ſaid—That you find you are a ſinner is well; that you ſeek after Jeſus, and feel the joy of the Holy Spirit in your heart, is well too; but that you feel a repugnancy to ſay to God, "My Father!" is unbelief, and the very thing that deprives you of ſweet communion with God, and of that bleſſed aſſurance of faith, which is ſo ſtrongly commended in his word. Were God your enemy, you would never feel that joy, or that love to Jeſus, of which you ſpeak, but rather dread and horror. You have certainly reaſon to believe that God is your gracious Father in Jeſus Chriſt.—He afterwards obtained a full aſſurance of his adoption.

Kriſſy, a daughter of the old Baſtard Hottentot John, was bleſſed with an hearing ear and an attentive heart. I was firſt acquainted with her juſt before our removal to the Great river. Her convictions of ſin were then powerful, and, on our journey, ſhe told me that ſhe had given up her whole ſelf to the Lord, and was aſſured that he had accepted of her, and was become her friend. One day, being with a number of Hottentots in the field, engaged in digging up a ſort of root, ſhe opened her heart to me, and expreſſed with great fluency the warmth of her love to the Friend of ſinners. "All that was "in the world," ſhe ſaid "durſt not come into compariſon with

"Him." At another time, when ſhe was in a dry and barren frame of mind, the Lord ſuited me to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon, directed to her caſe. In diſcourſing on ſuch an uncomfortable ſtate, I was led to inſiſt upon the privilege of a believer ſtill to have free acceſs to God, as it was not for the ſake of our long and fervent prayers that he became gracious to us. After ſermon ſhe came and informed me of her ſituation, and of the comfort ſhe had derived from the diſcourſe. "How happy is it," ſaid ſhe, that God knows all things, yea "the moſt ſecret motions of my heart; formerly this idea "uſed to make me tremble, but now I rejoice in it. He, "knowing my diſtreſs, directed you to ſpeak that word to me; "he has heard my ſecret groans, and ſent me relief." Some time after this her religious affections cooled, and ſhe became more indifferent to the things of God. Perceiving this I ſaid to her, "Kriſſy, you are no more what you have been. You "do not now retire for prayer as you formerly did."—"Alas!" ſhe replied, "I am now afraid to approach the Lord; I have been too bad of late." She was informed that this was a ſnare of Satan in which ſhe was entangled, and which ſhe muſt needs break through, going to Jeſus, juſt as at firſt, with all her guilt and miſery. She obeyed, and recovered her peace.

(To be concluded.)

FOR THE VIRGINIA RELIGIOUS MAGAZINE.

REMARKABLE PANICKS.

In reading that part of the Rev. Mr. Kicherer's Narrative, publiſhed in the ſixth number of the *Virginia Religious Magazine*, my attention was arreſted by the account he gives of a remarkable deliverance experienced by him from the wicked deſigns of a man who called himſelf Stephanos. Mr. Kicherer ſays, "It ſhould ſeem that he had contrived a ſcheme to murder me, that he might ſeize on my waggon and goods, and then depart to a diſtant Horde. In the night, he actually approached my bed; but the keeper of Iſrael who never ſlumbers nor ſleeps, was pleaſed *ſuddenly to rouse me in a fit of terror*, in which I cried out to him, as if privy to his bloody deſign. He was diſconcerted, ſtamered an apology of a pain in his bowels, and then went away out of my houſe," &c.

Whatever may be thought of this and things of a ſimilar nature, or in whatever way they are to be accounted for, it is certain ſuch things have frequently happened: attended often with very remarkable circumſtances. Were I to relate a tenth part of what I have heard from perſons of credit, of things of this nature, it would fill ſeveral ſheets. The following facts, being well authenticated, will be ſufficient to anſwer my preſent deſign. If any one wiſhes to hear more of things of this nature, let him occaſionally introduce the ſubject in converſation, and if I am not miſtaken, he will ſoon hear of inſtances enough.

Mr. James Moore, who is ſtill living in the county of Tazwell, was taken by the Indians, when about fifteen years of age. He was going to a waſte plantation, two or three miles from the place where his father then lived, to catch a horſe. As he was walking along the path unapprehenſive of any danger, he was ſuddenly ſeized with a panick ſo powerful, that it cauſed him inſtantly to ſtop. His knees trembled, and his

mind was filled with the moſt awful apprehenſions. He thought of returning home, but expected if he returned with ſuch a ſtory he would be laughed at. He therefore proceeded on his way, frequentiy halting and thinking of turning his courſe; but was ſtill at a loſs for a reaſon to juſtify him in doing ſo. In this ſituation he proceeded for, perhaps, three-quarters of a mile; until at length, an Indian roſe up a ſhort diſtance from the path, came to him and laid hold of him. Suppoſing it poſſible that he had been thinking of Indians, and that this might have given riſe to his fears, I enquired of him whether it were not ſo. He replied, that he did not recollect thinking of Indians the whole time; that his mind was filled with the apprehenſion that ſome dreadful animal, ſuch as he had never ſeen or heard of, would fall on him and devour him: that when he firſt ſaw the Indian, he thought he was the animal of which he had been apprehenſive: and that when he diſcovered that he was a human being, his fear left him.

In the life of the Earl of Rocheſter, writen by Biſhop Burnet, is the following account, which, it appears, was communicated to the Biſhop by the Earl himſelf.

"When he (the Earl) went to ſea in the year 1665, there happened to be in the ſame ſhip with him Mr. Mountague, and another gentleman of quality; theſe two, the former eſpecially, ſeemed perſuaded that they ſhould never return to England. Mr. Mountague ſaid he was ſure of it; the other was not ſo poſitive. When the day came that they thought to have taken the Dutch fleet in the port of Bergen, Mr. Mountague, though he had ſuch a ſtrong preſage in his mind of his approaching death, yet he generouſly ſtayed all the while in a place of the greateſt danger. The other gentleman ſygnalized his courage in a moſt undaunted manner, till near the end of the action, when he fell on a ſudden into ſuch a trembling that he could ſcarce ſtand; and Mr. Mountague going up to him to hold him up, as they were in each others arms, a cannon ball killed them outright, and carried away Mr. Mountague's belly, ſo that he died within an hour after."

The Earl of Rocheſter told me (continues the Biſhop) that theſe preſages they had on their minds, made ſome impreſſion on him, that there were ſeparated beings; and the ſoul, either by natural ſagacity or ſome ſecret notice communicated to it, had a ſort of divination."

In addition to the above facts, there are two others, too remarkable to be omited. One is, that Homer ſometimes repreſents his heroes when about to be ſlain, as having, not only a preſage of their fate, but as being ſtruck with a panick, very much like that in the paſſage above quoted, from the life of Rocheſter.

Witneſs the caſe of Patroclus. After repreſenting him engaged with the Trojans and performing prodigies of valor, we find the following lines, as tranſlated by Cowper.

" But when the fourth time, deamon like, he ruſh'd
" Againſt them, then, oh then, too manifeſt—
" The conſumation of thy days approach'd
" Patroclus! * * * * * * *
" Confuſion ſeiz'd his brain; his noble limbs
" Quak'd under him, and panick-ſtun'd he ſtood.
" Then came a Dardon chief, who from behind,
" Enforc'd a pointed lance into his back
" Between the ſhoulders," &c.

This, to be ſure, is the fiction of the poet. But it affords ſufficient evidence, that ſuch things had been obſerved in the days of Homer; elſe, how came he by the knowledge of them, or why does he give them a place in his poem.

The other caſe is that of Ahaſuerus, king of Babylon, of which we have an account in the book of Eſther. Haman advanced to riches and honor by the king, was elated with pride and highly exaſperated, becauſe Mordecai the jew, who ſat at the king's gate, would not bow to him. By the advice of his wife and friends, he had a gallows erected, fifty cubits high, on which he deſigned Mordecai to be hung. Of all this it appears the king Ahaſuerus was ignorant. But (chap. vi. verſe 1, &c.) " *On that night could not the king sleep;* and he

"commanded to bring the book of records of the chronicles,
"and they were read before the king. And it was found
"written, that Mordecai had told of Bigthana and Tereſh,
"two of the king's chamberlains, the keepers of the door,
"who ſought to lay hands on the king Ahaſuerus. And the
"king ſaid what honor and dignity hath been done to Mor-
"decai for this?" &c.

Although this account is found in a book of the ſacred Scriptures, it, nevertheleſs, appears to contain nothing more than an authentic hiſtory of what befel a heathen Prince. Nor can I ſee any reaſon why the ſame, or a ſimilar thing might not happen to any one now, or at any other period of the world. Viewed in this light it ſerves to ſhew us how the ſupreme diſpoſer of all events, who has the hearts of all fleſh in his hand, turns them whitherſoever he pleaſes. We are told '*the king could not sleep.*' In this it ſeems naturally implied, that he felt an unuſual reſtleſſneſs and diſquietude. But little he thinks of the inviſible hand that drove ſleep from his pillow, or of the end it was deſigned to anſwer. He was, however, led to order that the book of records of the chronicles ſhould be brought and read before him: and by that means was Mordecai ſaved from the gallows, that very night erected for him by Haman. But to whom are we ultimately, to aſcribe this deliverance? Evidently to him who works all things according to the council of his own will. The primary agent was behind the curtain, but the work manifeſts its author. It could not be Haman, for he was ploting Mordecai's deſtruction. It could not be Ahaſuerus, for he was ignorant of Haman's deſigns. Nor could it be Mordecai, for he knew not what was doing either by Haman or the king. And to aſcribe it to chance would be as unreaſonable as it would to make chance the author of that nice deſign and beautiful harmony, manifeſt in the viſible creation. Although this laſt caſe is not exactly of the ſame nature with thoſe before ſtated, yet as it bears a ſtrong reſemblance to them, I have thought proper to mention it.

I will now add a few reflections on the facts above ſtated.

1, They have all the marks of credibility which we could reaſonably expect in caſes of ſuch a nature. They happened at very diſtant periods, and in parts of the world very remote from each other. There could be no concert, nor is there the leaſt reaſon to believe there was any intention to deceive. It appears to me, that, in whatever way they may be accounted for, facts of a nature ſo remarkable, and atteſted by evidence ſo various and reſpectable, have a juſt claim to our attention: and that to overlook them, or paſs them with a ſneer, is as unphiloſophical as it is impious.

2, I can ſee no rational way of accounting for thoſe facts, but that ſuggeſted by the Earl of Rocheſter, viz. that they were produced by ſome inviſible and intelligent agent or agents. If any are for aſcribing them to chance, the Deity of atheiſts and infidels, let them pleaſe to inform us what they mean by chance, and what effects it has been known to produce. But could chance rouſe Mr. Kicherer at the very moment the murderer was approaching his bed? Could chance paralize the limbs of Mr. Moore when he was approaching the graſp of the unknown and unſuſpected ſavage? Did chance know the direction of the cannon ball that took the life of the gentleman, mentioned by the Earl of Rocheſter? Had chance given it its commiſſion, and did this all powerful agent ſuddenly take the ſtrength and courage from that gentleman, while he was ignorant of what awaited him? If ſo, chance is not only powerful, but intelligent. For ſurely nothing void of intelligence could do ſuch things.

3. It is not improbable, but that thoſe things were effected by the inſtrumentality of intelligent agents, ſubordinate to, and dependant on the Deity. Of the exiſtence of ſuch agents, both good and bad, and of their influence on men, the ſcriptures leave no room to doubt. And their exiſtence, let infidels ſay what they pleaſe, is ſo far from being repugnant to reaſon, that reaſon itſelf renders it probable. All nature is ſtocked with life. The air, the earth, the ſea, are full of ani-

mals. Nature in this ſenſe ſeems to abhor a vacum. Life appears to be moulded into every poſſible conſiſtent form, and every rock that can ſuſtain it in any of thoſe forms is ſtocked with it. "Every part of matter, *says Mr. Addison*, is peopled; every green leaf ſwarms with inhabitants. There is ſcarcely a ſingle humour in the body of man, or of any other animal, in which our glaſſes do not diſcover myriads of living creatures. We find even in the moſt ſolid bodies, as marble itſelf, innumerable cells and cavities, which are crowded with ſuch imperceptible inhabitants, as are too little for the naked eye to diſcover." What ſhall we ſay to theſe things? Does the infinitely wiſe and glorious God take pleaſure in giving life to ſuch immenſe multitudes of inſignificant animals, and has he no delight in giving exiſtence to creatures of a more exalted nature, and more noble workmanſhip? But beſides this, exuberance of life, evidently manifeſting a diſpoſition in the Deity to confer exiſtence, we ſee a nice and beautiful gradation from the loweſt up to man, evidently the top piece of the globe we inhabit. Shall we then conclude that this gradation riſes no higher than man? Is that inconceivable ſpace between man and the Deity unoccupied? Such a dreary chaſm in nature is contradicted by the analogy of every part of the creation which is ſubject to our ſcrutiny. Who then can ſay that the exiſtence of intelligent agents, unincumbered with bodies, is either impoſſible or improbable.

4, Admitting the above remarks to be juſt, if the matter is duly conſidered, it will not, I conceive, either encourage ſuperſtition or favour impulſes in any ſenſe that will be exceptionable or dangerous. However numerous inferior agents may be, or whatever powers they may poſſeſs, they are all but miniſters to execute the will of the moſt high; and are entirely under his control. We have, therefore, no reaſon to ſeek the favor or dread the diſpleaſure of any one but God. And as to impulſes, ſhould any one experience a panick ſimilar to any of thoſe above ſtated, it would not warrant him to do any thing which would otherwiſe be criminal, or to neglect

any thing which would otherwiſe be duty. The only legitimate uſe which he could make of it would be, to rouſe him to circumſpection, and to inſpire him with caution. If in circumſtances ſimilar to thoſe of Mr. Moore, he ſhould be led to ſuſpect that danger attended the path he was purſuing, and ſhould thereby be put on his guard, or determined to purſue his object by an other rout, I do not know that he would act irrationally, or that the conſequence could be dangerous. It would indeed have ſomething of the appearance of being governed by an impulſe, but it would not be making it the rule of Deity.

FOR THE VIRGINIA RELIGIOUS MAGAZINE.

INFANT BAPTISM.—No. III.

It is proper that we ſhould now inquire whether the practice of the Apoſtles correſponded with the interpretation which has been given of Chriſts' commiſſion to his diſciples, in the preceding number.

The witneſſes of the Apoſtolical praſtice are of two kinds—firſt, the inſpired writers—and ſecondly, the eccleſiaſtical authors, of the firſt, and pureſt ages of the church. To the teſtimony of the inſpired writers no objection can be made. As far as it is clear, it is deciſive. But the Baptiſts enter a ſolemn proteſt, againſt admitting the fathers as witneſſes in this cauſe. They pretend that it is a departure from the great Proteſtant principle, '*that the Scriptures are our only infallible rule of faith and practice;*' but this is not true, for we introduce them, not to eſtabliſh by their authority, a new principle; or ordinance, but only to give their teſtimony as to matters of fact, of which they undoubtedly are competent, and credible witneſſes. We ſhould be careful not to invalidate the teſtimony of theſe ancient ſervants of Jeſus Chriſt, becauſe upon it we depend for the genuineneſs of the ſcrip-

tures, of the New Teſtament. How can we know that the Goſpels and epiſtles were written by the perſons whoſe names they bear, or that they were written at the time when thoſe men lived, except by the teſtimony of their ſucceſſors? And theſe are the very perſons, by whoſe writings it may be proved, that infant baptiſm was practiſed from the days of the Apoſtles. And ſurely if their teſtimony be received in the firſt caſe it cannot conſiſtently be refuſed in the laſt; for it was as eaſy for them to know what the Apoſtles practiſed, as what they wrote. I do not affirm, that they have given their teſtimony as fully in the latter, as in the former caſe, but as far as it goes, it is of the ſame kind, and ought not to be rejected. It is of no conſequence, what their opinions, reſpecting the uſe and neceſſity of baptiſm, were. We do not produce them as authorities to regulate our opinions in matters of doctrine. Being fallible men they were liable to err, as well as others, but in matters of fact, they certainly may be depended on, for many of them proved their ſincerity, by ſhedding their blood as martyrs for the truth. The queſtion, which ſhould be ſeriouſly pondered by the Baptiſts is, whether learned men who lived within one hundred years of the Apoſtles' times, could be miſtaken with reſpect to their practice in a matter of this ſort? We live nearly three hundred years from the commencement of the reformation, and yet we find no difficulty in aſcertainig what the practice of the reformers was, in adminiſtrating the ſacraments. And I do not ſee why Origen, Cyprian, and Gregory Nazianzen, ſhould not have known as well the practice of the Apoſtles. If a corrupt practice had crept into all the churches, and they had connived at it, yet they muſt have known the ſteps by which it was introduced, and would never have been ſo preſumptuous as to charge it upon the Apoſtles.

I ſhall therefore proceed to cite teſtimonies in favor of Infant baptiſm, beginning with the inſpired writers. And the firſt which I ſhall produce, is Luke, the companion of Paul, and the recorder of the moſt remarkable tranſactions of his life.

In the xvi. chap. of the Acts of the Apoſtles, he informs us that at Philippi, Paul baptized Lydia, and '*her houſhold.*' By which we are led to believe, that the old method of receiving proſelytes by whole families was not aboliſhed, but continued, For if a new principle had been introduced, that none but adult believers ſhould be admitted into the church, the inſpired hiſtorian would ſcarcely have expreſſed the tranſaction, in language ſo well calculated to miſlead thoſe, who had been accuſtomed to ſee whole houſholds received into the church of God, by circumciſion, and baptiſm. What is meant when it is ſaid that the houſhold of this woman was baptized, but that all her family, children and ſervants, who were completely under her control, were with her received into the church. It is true, no mention is made of infants—neither was it neceſſary—Children make a large part of moſt houſholds, and the example before us authorizes us to baptize the whole houſhold upon the converſion of the head. But it is pretended that all who were baptized by the Apoſtle were believers, or made a profeſſion of faith—Let this be proved, and we will give up the example, as making nothing in our favor. It is ſaid, that Lydia, was not at her own proper home, at Philippi, as the text informs us ſhe was of Thyatira—But let her home, have been here, or there, ſhe had her houſhold with her, and no more is meant when it is ſaid ſhe was of Thyatira, than that ſhe was born and brought up there, as Paul is ſaid to be of *Tarsus* for the ſame reaſon.

But it is thought to be improbable that ſhe ſhould have young children, as no mention is made of her huſband, and the houſe is called her own—What her relative ſituation was, cannot now be aſcertained—neither can it be determined whether ſhe had infants in the houſe. We ſuppoſe it probable that ſhe had, becauſe children make a part of moſt houſes, but we do not affirm it as a certain fact. We do not lay any great ſtreſs upon it. What we affirm, and what we think ſufficient, is, that upon her converſion, her houſhold was baptized in conſequence of it, as well as herſelf. The queſtion

which needs the force of an example to decide it, is not so much whether infants were actually baptized, as whether the old cuſtom of receiving proſelytes was retained; for we know if this can be eſtabliſhed, infant baptiſm follows of courſe—And the example now under conſideration, appears to me to prove, that the cuſtom of the apoſtles was to receive as diſciples the whole houſhold upon the faith of its head. But to turn aſide the force of this example, the Baptiſts have one more ſubterfuge, which is derived from the laſt verſe in the chapter; where it is ſaid 'And they went out of the priſon, and entered into the houſe of Lydia; and when they had ſeen the brethren, they comforted them and departed.' The argument is, that Lydia's houſhold could not be infants, becauſe they were capable of being comforted. The reader perhaps will think with me, that this evaſion deſerves to be called pitiful. It is not even intimated, that theſe brethren, whom Paul and Silas comforted, were of the houſhold of Lydia. It is known to every perſon, who has read the whole chapter attentively, that there were other perſons beſides Silas in Paul's company, when he came to Philippi, particularly Luke and Timothy, who were not committed to priſon, and who were no doubt greatly diſtreſſed, at the ill-uſage of their companions, and much comforted to meet them after their deliverance—Theſe therefore I ſuppoſe, were the brethren ſpoken of; but if not there were no doubt many converts made by the Apoſtles' preaching, beſides Lydia, as the text ſays he was *many days*, in the city before he was apprehended; and we know that in a ſhort time there was a flouriſhing church in this place—This example of houſhold baptiſm appears therefore to be perfectly in point, and to be unincumbered with any difficulty which detracts from its force. The next inſtance is recorded in the ſame chapter, and is ſo nearly ſimilar in its import, that it will be unneceſſary to conſider it minutely. I will only obſerve, that the 34th verſe ought to be tranſlated—'*He having believed* in God rejoiced with all his houſe,' ſo that it appears that the Jailor's family, was alſo baptized upon *his* profeſſion

of faith, and not upon their *own*. But I will not inſiſt on this example, but proceed to introduce another witneſs viz. Paul himſelf.

In 1 Cor. i. 16. he ſays 'And I baptized alſo the houſhold of Stephanas'—This example certainly ſerves to ſhew that the baptiſm of whole houſholds was an eſtabliſhed practice in the time of the Apoſtles, and as to what is alledged about the members of this houſhold addicting themſelves many years after their baptiſm, to the miniſtry of the ſaints, it is too weak to deſerve any reply.

Houſhold baptiſm is eſtabliſhed therefore by plain ſcripture examples, and as infants are a component part of moſt houſholds, we are authorized to adminiſter this ordinance to them, when found in the houſe of a believer.

But I will now produce a teſtimony from the ſame epiſtle of the ſame inſpired Apoſtle, which in my apprehenſion, more clearly alludes to the practice of infant baptiſm, than any other text in the New Teſtament. I mean the 14th verſe of the vii. chapter, in which children in conſequence of the faith of one of their parents are ſaid to be (hagia) holy. This word uſed in the original, does not preciſely correſpond with the Engliſh word holy, by which it is tranſlated, but properly ſignifies any perſon or thing, *set apart, or consecrated, to the service of God*, as does the Hebrew word (kadoſh) which is conſtantly rendered (hagios) by the ſeptuagint. Hear Doctor G. Campbell on this point. *"In regard to the word "Kadoſh, Hagios, I acknowledge that it does not ſeem to me "to have had originally any relation to character or morals. "Its primitive ſignification appears to have been *clean*. Firſt "literally: ſecondly as expreſſing what according to the reli- "gious ritual, was accounted *clean*. The firſt is natural, the "ſecond ceremonial cleanneſs. Some traces of the firſt of "theſe meanings, we have in the Old Teſtament, but nothing

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*D. Pre. Diss. P. 96.

"is more common there than the ſecond, particularly in the "Pentateuch. Again as things are made clean, to prepare "them for being uſed, the term has been adopted to denote, "thirdly, *prepared, fitted, destined*, for a particular purpoſe, "whatever that purpoſe may be. Fourthly, and more eſpeci-"ally, *consecrated*, or devoted to a religious uſe." &c.*

All real critics as far as I know are agreed upon this ſubject. Then we have an inſpired Apoſtle declaring to the Corinthian church that their children were conſecrated to God, or holy, in oppoſition to thoſe who were *akatharta* unclean, which can mean nothing elſe than that theſe children had been baptized, which is the ceremony by which Chriſtians are ſeparated from the world, and conſecrated to the ſervice of God. And accordingly the members of Chriſtian churches are conſtantly addreſſed by the appropriate title of, *hagiois*, which is tranſlated, ſaints, but means, conſecrated, that is baptized perſons. And when the ſame title by which church members are deſignated commonly is applied to children, can we doubt that they were alſo baptized; the explanation of this text which would make the word (hagia) holy, ſignify legitimate, is really too abſurd to require a ſerious confutation. It will be ſufficient to obſerve that although this term, be uſed ſeveral hundreds of times in the ſcriptures it is never uſed in any ſuch ſenſe. And the context is ſo far from requiring ſuch an interpretation that to admit it makes the Apoſtle guilty of an abſurdity; as though he ſhould ſay, notwithſtanding you have been regularly married, yet if the unbelieving huſband were not ſanctified by the believing wife your children would be illegitimate, *but now are they legitimate.* Surely the Apoſtle did not mean to ſay this, and if not what could he mean but that the children by being dedicated to God by a ſolemn rite, were relatively holy? There is but one objection to this

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* *See Doctor Campbell's whole diſſertation, on the words hagios and hosios.*

interpretation which deſerves any notice, and that is, that the ſame kind of holineſs is predicated of the unbelieving parent and the children; and if it follows that the children were, or ought to be baptized becauſe they are called *holy*, then the ſame concluſion muſt be drawn with reſpect to the unbelieving parent, which it is ſuppoſed, would be abſurd. To this I anſwer,

1. That even if the difficulty of giving a ſatisfactory explanation of what is meant by the ſanctification of the unbelieving parent, ſhould not be removed, yet that is no reaſon why we ſhould not be able to underſtand the term *holy* as applied to the children of a believing parent.

2. The common explication of theſe words is much more rational and conſiſtent than any one yet propoſed by the Baptiſts. Dr. Doddridge paraphraſes the verſe thus "For in ſuch a caſe as this the unbelieving huſband is ſo ſanctified to the wife and the unbelieving wife is ſo ſanctified to the huſband, that their matrimonial converſe, is as lawful as if they were both of the ſame faith, otherwiſe your children in theſe mixed caſes were unclean, and muſt be looked upon as unfit to be admitted to thoſe peculiar ordinances by which the ſeed of God's people are diſtinguiſhed, but now they are confeſſedly holy"—And in a note this judicious and candid writer, ſays "On the matureſt and moſt impartial conſideration of this text I muſt judge it to refer to *infant-baptism.*"

3. But I muſt confeſs I am better pleaſed with the learned Dr. Hammond's expoſition of this text than any one which I have yet ſeen, becauſe it makes the ſanctification ſpoken of, to be the ſame, both with regard to the unbelieving parents, and the children; and becauſe it puts the verb *(egiastai)* in its true tenſe. In our tranſlation it is rendered as if it were the preſent time, whereas it is found in the perfect, and inſtead of, *is sanctified*, ought to be tranſlated, *has been sanctified.* Concerning the ſtrict propriety of this tranſlation, no one can doubt, who underſtands any thing of the Greek language,

whatever he may think of the explanation which is here ſubjoined. The unbelieving huſband has been ſanctified by the believing wife—that is "it is a ſtrong argument why the believer ſhould not forſake the unbeliever, that it has often been the caſe that the unbelieving huſband has been won over to the belief of the Goſpel, by the chaſte and holy converſation of the wife and has been conſequently induced to ſubmit to baptiſm; by which he was *ſanctified* or conſecrated to the ſervice of God, and alſo the unbelieving wife, by the huſband; and were it not for the expectation of this event, the children of ſuch of you as are in this ſituation would have been left out of the church, but now are they by baptiſm received into it." For the proſpect of inſtruction in the religion of Chriſt is the great reaſon why any are admitted into the church—The above interpretation ſeems to be corroborated, by the 16th verſe, '*For what knowest thou O wife, but thou ſhalt ſave thy husband; or how knowest thou O man but thou ſhalt ſave thy wife?*' By theſe words it appears, that the great motive which the Apoſtle urged, to induce the believer not to leave the unbeliever, was the proſpect there was, of his converſion; and as the 14th verſe will bear the ſame ſenſe, I am inclined to think the ſcope of the Apoſtle requires that it ſhould be ſo undorſtood, although I am not inſenſible that there is ſome difficulty attached to this interpretation; but perhaps it is not ſo great as at firſt ſight it might appear.

There is only one more authority, which I mean to uſe, from the inſpired writers, and that is, that the Apoſtles in writing to the churches, the members of which are deſignated by the term *hagiois, or consecrated ones*, addreſs themſelves to children of all ages who were capable of rendering obedience to parents, "Children obey your parents," is repeated more than once in epiſtles which are addreſſed to (hagiois) the ſaints. This may appear to be an argument of little weight, but I think it deſerves to be mentioned—Theſe children were ſuch as were yet to be brought 'up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.' And tho' at the time when theſe epiſtles

were written they were old enough to underſtand a command, to obey their parents, yet they might be entirely too young, to have been baptized on a profeſſion of their own faith.

I do not however, lay much ſtreſs on it, but in connexion with other things it may ſerve to caſt ſome light on the ſubject. And may help to ſhew us that children as well as grown perſons, were included in the Apoſtolical churches.

It is an obſervation worthy of notice, that the evidence of infant baptiſm, does not ariſe from any ſingle point, nor depend on any ſingle argument, but muſt be collected from various ſources; and although each ray of light may appear weak when ſeparated from the reſt, yet the whole when collected in one point of view, is ſtrong enough to exhibit the truth clearly.

QUADRATUS.

43 page vol 2, 15th line for *mathetensate* read *matheteusate*

FOR THE VIRGINIA RELIGIOUS MAGAZINE.

PHILANDER TO POLITUS, LETTER III,

SIR,

To prove that piety tends to promote our happineſs, I argue, in the firſt place, from that pure and exquiſite pleaſure which flows immediately from the very exerciſe of pious affec- affections.

It is even a trite obſervation, that every benevolent affection of the human heart, is accompanied with a degree of pleaſure. A little careful attention to what paſſes within his own breaſt, will convince any man who has ſuch affections, that this is the caſe; and, that the pleaſure is proportioned to their ſtrength and conſtancy. Now, piety conſiſts in the exerciſe and cultivation of the moſt generous and noble affections, of which our nature is capable; and therefore tends directly, by the very conſtitution of man, to increaſe his happineſs.

We naturally and invariably find pleaſure in the diſcovery and contemplation of every kind of excellence for which we

poſſeſs a taſte. But of all kinds of excellence, none affords to a correct taſte ſo pure or ſo high a delight as that of moral perfection. Is it poſſible for a virtuous mind to contemplate the character of eminent wiſdom and rectitude in a fellow-creature without being conſcious of very pleaſing emotions? But what is all created excellence compared with that of the infinitely perfect Jehovah? And if we are ſo much gratified by an acquaintance with men of worth, how much more is the pious mind delighted with the knowledge and adoration of that eternal Being who unites in himſelf every thing good and glorious, to a degree abſolutely beyond our utmoſt comprehenſion.

We are capable of loving moral excellence ſimply for its own ſake. We often admire it, with conſcious pleaſure, in perſons long ſince deceaſed, or otherwiſe ſo ſituated that we entertain no idea of ever being known or eſteemed by them in return. Yet it muſt be granted that the heart always deſires a return, a reciprocation of affection when it is ſuppoſed to be attainable. Moſt men are little aware how greatly their happineſs depends on ſuch a mutual intercourſe of eſteem, good will and confidence. Imagine to yourſelf an individual, whether placed in the midſt of ſociety or not, who feels no reſpectful nor benevolent regard toward any other being, and who knows that no one feels any ſuch regard toward him. Can ſuch a perſon be happy? The mind inſtinctively revolts from the idea of ſuch a ſituation, and can ſcarcely form a notion of any ſtate more completely wretched. Probably it is a law of all intelligent crcatures that their happineſs depends eſſentially upon a reciprocation of kind affection. Perhaps the eternal and infinite bleſſedneſs of the triune God may ariſe from ſomething of the ſame kind, from the mutual love of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt. But however this may be, it is not a diſtant unregarding Being whom the humble Chriſtian loves and adores: it is his God, his Father, and his Friend. The great object of all true religion is to reſtore and carry to perfection this happy intercourſe between God

and his creatures, this communion of love, which we have loſt by our apoſtacy, and without which we cannot but be forever miſerable. It would not indeed be ſtrictly proper to ſay that God loves his children in return for their love to him. For it is his grace that begins this bleſſed work in us, when by our ſins we have become altogether averſe from it; and effectually carries it on amidſt ten thouſand obſtacles. To him therefore, and not to us, is the praiſe juſtly due. I only aſſert the fact that true piety does imply a habitual intercourſe of mutual love between God and the pious ſoul. The pious man is the friend of God!

Love to God begins with a high and cordial eſteem of his character. This ſentiment, though it is and muſt be the fruit of divine grace in us, yet falls in directly with our natural propenſity to know, to admire and to be connected with perfection, eſpecially perfection of the moral kind. Limited as the mind of man is, it ſeems to have a graſp of deſire which nothing ſhort of infinite excellence can completely ſatisfy. Let the degrading and ſtupifying thraldom of ſenſual purſuits and gratifications be once broken; let man begin to feel the capacities of his own ſoul, and to underſtand the dignified felicity for which his nature was at firſt formed; he now looks around in eager ſearch for an object where he may explore perfection without limits and ever new, and where he may, without reſtraint, pour fourth all his admiration. The world affords no ſuch object: all is imperfection here. But in the infinite and unchangeable perfections of the ever bleſſed God, his power, wiſdom, goodneſs, holineſs, juſtice and truth, and eſpecially in the glorious goſpel of his mercy to periſhing ſinners, the pious man finds a boundleſs field for the moſt delightful contemplation. With wonder and adoration he ſtudies the divine attributes. And though it is not poſſible *by ſearching to find out the Almighty to perfection*, yet he taſtes an exquiſite pleaſure in tracing his footſteps in the works of creation, and in the diſpenſations of his providence and grace.

The more he learns of God, the greater is his eſteem of him and delight in him. And in connection with this delight the pious ſoul enjoys the inexpreſſibly precious perſuaſion that he himſelf is the object of divine approbation and complacency. For we know that God is pleaſed with his own holy image wherever it appears. The image of God indeed, even in the moſt advanced ſaint upon earth, is ſurrounded with much imperfection. Yet every real ſaint is in ſome meaſure, as the Apoſtle expreſſes it, *a partaker of the divine nature;* and conſequently an object of the complacential love of God. The ſaints delight in the Lord their God, and he delights in them. Precious communion! What can the world afford to make us happy in compariſon with this? What are the wealth, the honours and the grandeur of this fleeting world, compared with the approving ſmile and friendſhip of God? Let ſober reaſon anſwer this queſtion.

Again: love to God includes benevolence toward him. God exerciſes benevolence toward us in the moſt ſtrict and proper ſenſe. We are indebted to his bounty for every good thing we enjoy, and for all our hopes of future felicity. But the happineſs of God is independent, and incapable of increaſe. Our benevolence toward him therefore can only mean a diſpoſition to be pleaſed and rejoice that he is thus perfectly happy. And from the very terms I have been obliged to uſe in diſcribing this branch of love to God, it is evident that it is a pleaſurable ſentiment of the mind. It belongs to the nature of man, unleſs the heart be hardened by an exceſive and criminal ſelf love, *to rejoice with them that do rejoice*, and to find an important part of his own happineſs in contemplating, and, if it be poſſible, increaſing the happineſs of others. Surely this poſition needs no further proof than barely to be preſented to view. Muſt it not then afford very high pleaſure to the pious man, who feels himſelf the object of the boundleſs good will and beneficence of God, to reflect that his heavenly Father and Friend is perfectly happy *God*

over all blessed for ever? Yes, amidſt the confuſion and miſeries which overwhelm this poor world, it affords unſpeakable conſolation to the pious and benevolent mind to know that there is a Being, the juſt and good Governor of the univerſe, the greateſt and the beſt of beings, who is infinitely exalted in glory and felicity; whoſe perfect bliſs no ſtorms nor changes can ever diſturb or diminiſh for a ſingle moment and who ſhall aſſuredly continue thus glorious and happy to all eternity.

Gratitude for favours conferred is a dictate of our nature, and an eſſential part of love to God. All men feel it their duty to thank their benefactors; and join at once in condemning him who receives a benefit without grateful ſenſibility. And that gratitude is a delightful feeling, every one whoſe heart has been melted by kindneſs ſufficiently knows. *It is* indeed *more blessed to give than to receive.* But next to the pleaſure of giving is that of receiving an unmerited benefit with a thankful heart. I grant alſo that a ſenſe of obligation to our fellow-creatures is often rather painful than pleaſant; nor is it difficult to aſſign the reaſons. We ſometimes ſuſpect the motives by which men are induced to oblige us. Their beneficence is frequently attended with cutting reproaches and upbraidings of our unworthineſs. And we often have diſagreeable apprehenſions that we may be diſpoſed to ſevere humiliations in future by the favours we receive. But none of theſe circumſtances apply to the mercies beſtowed by our heavenly Benefactor. *He giveth liberally, and upbraideth not.* The pious man lives under a habitual impreſſion of his obligations to God, *the giver of every good gift*, for life and all its comforts. But eſpecially his heart melts with fervent gratitude to God for the unſpeakable gift of his dear Son, by whoſe obedience unto death, he is delivered from deſerved and eternal miſery, and made an heir of a bleſſed immortality. Is it poſſible to doubt whether ſuch impreſſions and ſentiments as theſe tend to promote the happineſs of the man in whoſe boſom they dwell? with you, I preſume, it is not poſſible. But I ſhall

have occaſion to conſider the happy tendency of pious gratitude more at large in a future part of this diſcuſſion.

Under love to God I included a longing deſire of more full and perfect communion with him. You will perhaps object to this branch of pious affection, that any ungratified deſire is ſo much pain. The objection does indeed prove that the Chriſtian's happineſs in the enjoyment of God is far from being complete: a fact which every Chriſtian very ſenſibly feels. But it by no means proves that the deſire is on the whole painful; or that it mars the pleaſure which he derives from the exerciſes of piety in other reſpects. The deſire of a pious ſoul to be more intimately united to God receives a ſweet portion of its gratification even now, a delightful earneſt of the promiſed inheritance. And it is at the ſame time a moſt animating evidence to the Chriſtian that he is ripening for that bleſſed ſtate where every obſtacle ſhall be removed, and he ſhall know love and enjoy God perfectly, without interruption, for ever and ever.

But is not the fear of God a painful feeling? The apprehenſion of his wrath and curſe is doubtleſs exceedingly painful. But this fear, though it is often uſeful in the introduction to a life of piety, is no eſſential part of piety itſelf. We ſpeak of that filial reverence of God which his people feel, and by which they are ſo repeatedly characterized in the ſcriptures: that ſacred delicacy of offending their heavenly Father, which is the fruit of their love to him, and one of the beſt guards of their obedience to his laws. In this ſenſe we always fear whomſoever we love. But ſurely there is no pain in this fear, but rather pleaſure. Does a dutiful child find it painful to reverance a worthy and beloved parent? Does he not feel a conſcious pleaſure in it? In a word, as pious fear is the immediate offspring of love to God, it intimately partakes of all the properties of love; as all pious men know by happy experience.

As to truſt in God, ſurely no laboured argument is neceſſary to ſhow that it is an exerciſe of mind highly delightful;

Our weakneſs and our wants, as well as our ſocial nature, prompt us to ſeek proper objects for the exerciſe of our confidence. We inſtinctively love to pour out our feelings and deſires into the boſom of a faithful friend, who feels a lively intereſt in all our concerns, and on whoſe wiſdom and ability and promiſe we may ſafely rely for protection and the promotion of our happineſs. Is not this one of the moſt endearing qualities of friendſhip and of love. Is there a man, poſſeſſed of any ſenſibility of heart, who has never felt this kind of pleaſure. If then the exerciſe of confidence in frail and changeable mortals makes ſo great a part of the beſt enjoyments of this life, how great muſt be the pleaſure of the Chriſtian while he commits himſelf with unlimited confidence to the faithful care of his God. Our fellow-creatures are every way inſufficient to be the objects of our higheſt truſt. We have ſometimes diſtreſſes and wants which it is not proper to communicate to them. We are ſurrounded with dangers from which they cannot guard us. We have intereſts, which they are neither wiſe nor powerful enough to manage effectually for us. And therefore, *cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, so that his heart departeth from the Lord.* But *blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is.* In him the pious ſoul finds love unchangeable, wiſdom unbounded, and everlaſting ſtrength. To this God and Father he commits himſelf with all his cares, and eſpecially his everlaſting intereſts ; and taſtes even now an inexpreſſible peace and tranquility in relying upon thoſe exceeding great and precious promiſes which he has given in Chriſt Jeſus to his people. I am aware that there are men, great philoſophers too, and champions of reaſon, according to their own account, who treat with ſneers of ridicule the whole doctrine of piety and communion with God. Many a bitter ſarcaſm and much pompous declamation have been employed to prove that experimental religion is all an empty dream of ignorance and ſuperſtition. If I forbear to call theſe boaſting philoſophers men of corrupt minds, I believe you will agree with me

that they are at leaſt men of very looſe and ſuperficial habits of thinking on this ſubject. They aſk, how can we love a Being whom we never ſaw; or rationally talk of a habitual and intimate intercourſe with a Spirit? Permit me for a moment to aſk ſuch an objector whether he has a friend whom he loves, and in whoſe company he takes delight? I take it for granted that he anſwers in the affirmative. Now what is it that he loves? is it the ſtature, the particular form, the viſible complexion of his friend? No, it is his mind; a ſubſtance as abſolutely inviſible as God himſelf. The exterior perſon is indeed ſometimes called an object of love, but only in a remote and figurative ſenſe, as it is the inſtrument by which we become acquainted with the attributes of the mind which dwells within. A perfect ſtatue may pleaſe the beholder, but never excites his love. And may we not obtain, do we not in fact poſſeſs as perfect evidence of the exiſtence, the omnipreſence, the goodneſs, and other attributes of the inviſible God, as we have of the exiſtence and attributes of each other? And conſequently, are not our pious affections toward him as completely rational as any affections of our hearts whatever. As to the way in which this ſacred intercourſe is conducted on God's part, it cannot be rendered very intelligible to thoſe who have nothing of the love of God in their hearts. But it may nevertheleſs be a very certain and real thing; as every pious man knows, to his joy, that it is. Do we doubt the reality of our ſight, becauſe one born blind cannot be made to underſtand its nature? God draws near to his people by the inſtrumentality of his word, and the effectual agency of his Holy Spirit. But irreligious men look on his word with frigid indifference, and of the effects of his Spirit's agency in enlightening, transforming, ſtrengthening and comforting the ſoul, they neither know nor deſire to know any thing. *He that loveth me*, ſays our bleſſed Lord, *ſhall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifeſt myſelf to him; and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.* Sweet pro-

miſes, which the humble Chriſtian finds made good to him every day.

In fine, piety may juſtly be called the proper element of human nature, in which it was appointed to exerciſe its faculties, and to find its true and everlaſting felicity. Sin is in every point of view a perverſion of our powers, and tends inevitably to our degradation and miſery. Before ſin entered into the world it was doubtleſs as natural to man to ſeek communion with God, and to find in it his beſt enjoyments, as it was to ſeek the food by which his animal life was ſuſtained. The religious principles of our nature are now indeed deplorably counteracted and overwhelmed by irregular appetites and paſſions. But they are not utterly extinguiſhed: nor can ſcarcely any degree of depravity altogether prevent their occaſional appearance as parts of our original conſtitution. Man without communion with God is out of his native ſphere of activity; wandering from the path of peace in the devious mazes of folly and deſtruction. And there is ſomething within his own boſom that often tells him ſo; though few, alas, liſten as they ought to the admonition.

Theſe reflections I ſubmit to your candid and ſerious conſideration. And with earneſt wiſhes that you may have a more impreſſive proof of their truth than any I can give you, even that of your own delightful experience, I ſubſcribe myſelf, &c.

PHILANDER.

FOR THE VIRGINIA RELIGIOUS MAGAZINE.

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON PROV. I. 10.

'*My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.*'

MAN was formed by God a social creature. The law of his nature prompts him to unite with his fellow creatures; and every enjoyment is heightened by a communication with others. "Nothing is agreeable to me *(said Cicero)* without a companion; for without a friend, life is nothing." But as a great part of human happiness depends upon our connection with one another, and flows from this intercourse, so through the corruption of our hearts, many of the evils and calamities into which we fall, much of the guilt which is our reproach, and many of the misfortunes which are consequent upon it, take their rise in, and are increased by the very same means. The dangerous influence which wicked companions have upon the mind, naturally so prone to evil, is obvious to all. It was long since observed by Epictetus, which is quoted by Saint Paul, that 'Evil communication corrupt good manners;' and the unhappy experience of many a man, and of young and incautious persons above all, affords a fatal proof of this, both to themselves and others. As soon as we begin to take any active part in life, so soon do we begin to fall into connexion with particular kinds of company, and to be influenced by it. And as our natural inclination is on the side of vice; as good company is not very willing to admit every one into its intimacy that may fall in the way, & as the bad are forward & obtrusive, ever ready to seduce the unwary youth; how fatally apt is he to fall into this dangerous snare! The practice, upon which this observation is grounded, is so common, that perhaps for that very reason it may be little noticed. But it is a matter of the greatest consequence to all; to those who are acting for themselves in the world, and daily mingling with mankind in the busy scenes of life; to those who have the care of rearing

the young, and to the young themſelves, who are beginning to form habits, and attach themſeves to company, the effects of which they may feel as long as they live, and to all eternity.

Youth is the forming period of life. The young are the hope of our country and of the church of God. Let me therefore exhort my young readers in a particular manner, to a ſerious application and attention to the ſubject of this diſcourſe.

The words are a counſel from heaven written by the inſp red King of Iſrael, and directed to the young. He had expe. rienced the ſad conſequences of not having attended to this direction, and was therefore the more ſolicitous to urge it upon the riſing generation. This book of Proverbs ſeems to have them as a particular object of attention, as the writer well knew the importance of the principles imbibed and the habits formed at this early ſeaſon of life. The text is an earneſt and affectionate caution againſt the ſociety of evil doers, or at leaſt againſt a compliance with their ſinful and pernicious ways.—'My ſon, if ſinners entice thee, conſent thou not.'

Sin is rebellion againſt God; and ſinners revolt from his righteous authority when they tranſgreſs his laws. And there is a principle in corrupted human nature, which leads the wicked to look for ſome ſupport and conſolation, from aſſociating others with them in their crimes; as if it would leſſen the aggravation of their guilt; or alleviate their ſenſe of ſhame and miſery here and hereafter, to have as many as poſſible in the ſame ſituation. Hence they are always ſolicitous to enſnare and corrupt others. Like the Devil, whom they ſerve in this infernal agency, they cannot endure the ſight of more innocence than they themſelves poſſeſs. As he tempted Adam, ſo do they enſnare and deceive as many of the young and unſuſpicious as they can. They place flattering allurements before them—overcome their modeſty and ingenious temper by ridicule—inſtil poiſonous principles into them—and familiarize them by degrees to ſuch horrid examples, that at length they become ſo deeply involved, as not only to practice

with pleaſure what they once ſhuddered at with horror; but become unable to reſiſt the indulgences which have become inveterate by habit. Againſt this danger the caution of the text is addreſſed, 'Conſent thou not.' Avoid their allurements—ſteadily withſtand their ſcorn—hearken not to their ſophiſtical and deluſive pleadings in favor of vice—and abhor their abominable practices and examples.

The danger of aſſociating with bad company is ſo obvious that wiſe and good men in every age have been obſerving it; and it has a place in the tables and proverbs (which are generally the reſult of experience) of every nation. Who that will reflect but a moment can be ignorant of it? Take an example of any vicious and debauched character of your acquaintance, whom you have known under different circumſtances, and you will be able perhaps to recollect the ſociety or ſcenes of vice, where he was ſeduced and initiated into licentious practices. We are all by nature bad enough, but it requires aſſiſtance to become as dreadfully wicked as ſome do. Vicious ſociety is therefore ever ready to afford this aſſiſtance by the allurements which they exhibit before one another. This is called *enticing*. The heart of man naturally thirſts for pleaſure, and where the underſtanding is blinded, the choico of this will ever be unhappily wrong. The paſſions of the young are ſo impetuous, and ſo eaſily hurried into exceſſes, that it is the buſineſs and care of wiſe parents, maſters, and guardians, to endeavor to reſtrain them, and to keep them as much as poſſible from thoſe ſcenes and objects which tend to inflame them. But profane and wicked companions are ſtudious to pleaſe them in ſuch circumſtances as will moſt naturally ſeduce them into vicious pleaſures. They paint theſe in the faireſt colours they are able—deſcribe the pleaſure they enjoy in the purſuit of thoſe gratifications—throw opportunities in their way—invite them to ſcenes of diſſipation and riotous amuſement, and never ceaſe to ſolicit and urge them, till they get them involved in the ſame criminality with themſelves. The ſacred name of friendſhip is proſtituted in theſe

ſinful combinations for vice; and under a falſe garb of kind. neſs and indulgence to their paſſions, they betray the unſuſ. pecting inexperienced youth into the moſt vicious courſes. Many who have periſhed miſerably by the hand of juſtice, have given an awful account of their firſt ſeductions by the bowl, and the obſcenity of riotous companions. 'O my ſoul, come not thou into their ſecret; mine honour, be not thou united with them!'

The danger of bad company will be further manifeſt by con-ſidering the ridicule that is often employed, by which unprin. cipled aſſociates too frequently obtain a victory over the reluc. tant modeſty of many an ingenious young man. A ſenſe of ſhame, that is of being deſpiſed by the company we converſe with, is very ſtrong in the human breaſt. It was wiſely placed in our conſtitution by God, to be a fence and guard to virtue. But this excellent principle is perverted by that unhappy en. gine of vice, the ridicule of things ſacred, and even decent as well as the profeſſion of them. This is hard to withſtand even by the beſt, who therefore avoid ſuch company. How dangerous then muſt it be to thoſe whoſe principles are not fixed! This is more ſucceſsful becauſe it attacks religion and virtue by falſhood and miſrepreſentation. Reaſon is not em. ployed as an inſtrument in making the aſſault, but ſome ſar. caſtic ſneer, calculated to raiſe the laugh againſt the perſon who ſtill preſerves ſome remains of goodneſs. How dread. ful will the effect of this be in corrupt ſociety, to hurry perſons away contrary to their better judgment, for fear of being re. proached as mean and unworthy the regard of the company! Another conſequence flowing from the ſame ſource is the per. nicious principles which practiſed ſinners endeavor to inſtil in. to others. Such perſons are not contented with their own wickedneſs, but they plead for ſin in general, and make it their conſtant endeavor to deſtroy the influence of conſcience, and awaken every ſentiment of moral duty, both in themſelves and others. Like their father the Devil, who could not reſt till he ruined a world of innocent beings, and that too by a lie;

ſo theſe unhappy perſons, being ſlaves to ſin, find their principal pleaſure in ſeducing others, by giving falſe repreſentations of ſin and duty. They take much pains to varniſh theſe in falſe cölours. Drunkenneſs and debauchery they are apt to call good fellowſhip. But what ſort of fellowſhip can there be where people have loſt their ſenſes? Filthy and obſcene diſcourſe is called the free language of nature, and lewd practices the indulgence of love. Profanity and contemptible jeſting upon things ſacred is called wit; and anger and revenge is ſpirit and honor with them. And there are ſome ſo abandoned in principle that they often plead for theſe under their proper names; and effect to think it ſtrange, that their Creator has endowed them with any diſpoſition or propenſity which it is unlawful for them to indulge in the moſt unlimited manner. On the contrary, the duties, which are the honor of man and ſupport of ſociety, are repreſented under different colors. Temperance and chaſtity are attributed to ſtingineſs and the want of ſpirit; a regard to decency and religion, is called bigotry and ſuperſtition; a patient temper and forgiveneſs of injuries, are called cowardice and mean ſpiritedneſs; prayer and praiſe, with them, is the whining cant of hypocriſy; and the neceſſary reſtraints of parents and teachers, an intolerable burden unfit for the noble ſpirits of free men. In a word, the whole ſtrain of ſuch converſation is an illuſion put upon the mind, which often enſlaves young perſons, and totally depraves their morals, before they are aware how far they are gone. Then to complete the horrid work in which they have ſo aſſiduouſly labored, they at length endeavor to deſtroy all diſtinction between virtue and vice, by infuſing the baneful principles of infidelity. For until this is done, the conſcience will be uneaſy.

But it is not only from what they hear, that bad company becomes dangerous, but alſo from the pernicious examples which they ſee. Many do not know how wicked it is poſſible for men to be, until they mingle in their ſociety. At firſt a comparatively innocent perſon will be ſtruck with horror at

hearing and ſeeing ſuch examples. But in time they have their effect. We are imitative creatures, and prone to do as our neighbors do. We adopt the ſentiments, the language, and the practices, with which we are much converſant. This is the caſe in bad company, until they who are initiated into it, loſe all the little good they ever had, and obtain nothing in return, but the horrid privilege of becoming one of the number. Now when we reflect how unſuſpecting young perſons are, and ſuppoſe them in the midſt of all the dangers I have mentioned what can be ſuppoſed more dreadfully dangerous: And add to this, our natural propenſity to ſin, and what muſt be the proſpect to a young perſon, or indeed to any other, who mixes habitually, and of *choice* with ſuch company! Habit will at length confirm, what accident at firſt begun, until we may ſay of them, 'Can the Ethiopian change his ſkin, or the Leopard his ſpots, then may they who are accuſtomed to do evil learn to do well.'

I might here finiſh the obſervations which were intended to be made, if it did not appear reaſonable, after having pointed out a danger, to endeavor to ſuggeſt ſome method for avoiding it. Let me therefore, intreat my readers, eſpecially the young, to give attention to the following conſiderations.

1. Conſider your natural weakneſs and liableneſs to impoſition. You may think yourſelves able to withſtand the enſnarements to which you are expoſed, but it is a wrong apprehenſion, for one is ſeldom in greater danger, than when he feels the moſt confidence and preſumption in himſelf. Corrupt pleaſures, to which our depraved appetites are ſo ſtrongly inclined, act like an opiate, and gently ſtupefy the faculties of the mind, and render it indiſpoſed to make reſiſtance. Many a man has ventured into bad company, with a determination in his own mind that he would not yield to their pernicious ways, who has been gradually drawn to the commiſſion of crimes, at which he would once have ſhuddered; and ſome have even become ringleaders in vice, who on their firſt approaches to it, apprehended themſelves principled againſt its

allurements. Let me therefore intreat you to be ſenſible of your danger, from your inexperience, and be willing to be inſtructed by the example of others, without making the trial for yourſelves. Why are parents and guardians ſo anxious for you, but becauſe they know the dangerous pecipice on which you ſtand? Will you rather think a profligate companion regards your intereſt, when he indulges your pleaſures, and conceals it from your friends? Can you imagine that he loves you, and regards your happineſs with equal tenderneſs as they do, who have nurſed you with parental care in your infancy, and fondly cheriſhed you at the expence of their own eaſe and quiet? Let me then impreſs the caution, 'Conſent thou not.' Avoid the ſociety of the wicked as you would the approach of a venemous ſerpent, and endeavor upon all occaſions to aſſociate with the good. If they ſhould appear ſcrupulous in admitting you at firſt, be not diſcouraged, for ſtill you may ſucceed by perſeverance. They will gladly welcome you as a companion, as ſoon as they ſhall have ſufficient evidence, that you are really deſirous of their friendſhip, Be not then like the kid, which, when charged by her mother to open the door to no one, before ſhe had looked out at the window, ridiculed her as being over cautious; but afterwards became an eaſy prey to the flattering inſinuations of the wolf, for not attending to the ſalutary advice.

2. Conſider how pernicious thoſe practices are in their own nature, which you are liable to contract by aſſociating with bad company. Profligacy of manners and the love of carnal pleaſures, have a direct tendency to depreſs any noble exertion of the mind, to chain it down in perpetual ignorance, and by degrees, to render the truth itſelf diſguſting. How many young men have you known, who from their birth and talents, might have aſpired to the higheſt offices in government, that have ſuffered their geniuſes to lie wholly uncultivated, from having been ſeduced by ſome debauched companions; And we often find, even in youth, ſuch obſtinacy in vice, that whoever would oppoſe their favorite paſſions is viewed with a

jealous eye ; and inſtead of hearkening to the admonitions of their beſt friends, who would gladly ſave them from the paths of deſtruction, they ſtop their ears, and think all their advice is only in oppoſition to their pleatures. Thus their conſciences become more and more hardened in ſin, until they have neither inclination nor power to reform their manners. Not being furniſhed with ideas and ſentiments to render them fit companions in ſenſible and improving converſation, they will feel out of their element, when they are not roaring and ſwearing with their lewd aſſociates in ſome tavern, or other haunt of debauchery. But I would beg you to think of the light in which the characters of veterans in ſin, are viewed by others of decent character. Would you be willing for your ſociety and converſation to be ſhunned as peſtiferous, by all people of ſobriety and modeſty? But if you cannot be influenced by the opinion of others, remember, that by your practices, your bodies will be finally overwhelmed with diſeaſe and wretchedneſs ; and the eſtates, which have been procured for you by the diligence and induſtry of your anceſtors, will be waſted in riotous diſſipation, and you probably left to the pity or ſcorn of thoſe on whom you formerly looked down with contempt. For, as a late writer has elegantly expreſſed it, "However innocent and free from direct immorality worldly pleaſure may appear, however faſcinating her garb ; however ſoft and inſinuating her ſmiles and perſuaſions ; however numerous and faſhionable her votaries ; yet if you ſuffer yourſelves to be allured by the flattering voice of this ſyren, ſhe will inſenſibly conduct you into thoſe regions of miſery and deſpair, whence few return to recite the doleful tale of her fatal deluſions."

3. Permit me in the laſt place to urge you to conſider the claim that God has upon your obedience. This will be the moſt effectual ſecurity againſt the evil, from which I would diſſuade you. He has endowed you with all the noble powers of mind by which you are diſtinguiſhed from the inferior creation ; he has protected you by his providence in innumera-

ble inſtances from your childhood to the preſent day; he has graciouſly connected your duty and happineſs together, and taught you that ſin will infallibly be followed by puniſhment; and as if all theſe things were ſmall, he has given his only begotten Son, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who died for our ſins and roſe again for our juſtification. Ought you not then to love, honour, and obey him? Or will you rather employ all the privileges he has beſtowed upon you in rebelling againſt him, and ruining yourſelves? No, rather endeavor to obtain habits of real piety. For let me aſſure you upon the authority of God's word, and long obſervation, that true religion and virtue are the ready road to health of body, peace and tranquility of mind, wealth and public credit. "Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honor." But what will libertiniſm end in, but the total ruin both of ſoul and body here and hereafter?

QUINTUS.

FOR THE VIRGINIA RELIGIOUS MAGAZINE.

VIVAX AND PAULINUS.—A DIALOGUE:

VIVAX *and* PAULINUS, *are young gentlemen, who at present reside in the same neighborhood; they were educated together and have kept up a friendly intercourse ever since the commencement of their studies. They have enjoyed the same religious privileges, tho' their improvement has, until lately, been very dissimilar: as will appear from the following dialogue.*

Vivax. I AM happy to see you this evening, my good friend Paulinus. I have juſt heard a discourse from your favourite Preacher Eusebious, with which I conjecture, you would have been agreeably entertained, and not a little edefied, had you been one of the audience.

Paulinus. I am sorry I could not attend: but hope from your account of the sermon, that it has not been unprofitable to you.

V. Truely sir, I have often met with less entertainment from the pulpit: but as to any advantage from that quarter, you know, that is what I never expect.

P. It grieves me Vivax to find that your prejudices against the gospel and its institutions, remain undeminished: I hope however, that an attention will yet take place, in your opinions, respecting the important subject of religion.

V. No sir, my sentiments are unalterably fixed, I assure you, I object not, however, to the continuance of such a body of men, as the clergy: In the present state of the world they are necessary. Without a belief of the doctrines they inculcate, a large majority of mankind would be entirely ungovernable; nay, the human race would soon be exterminated. Men have not yet risen, to that grade of rational improvement which would make it safe to inform them, that all the alarming denuncinations of divine vengeance, which they have been accustomed to hear from the pulpit, have had as their origin the craftiness of Politicians and the avarice of Priests.

P. Is it then your sincere opinion, that the doctrines contained in the Bible are false?

V. Utterly false sir.

P. And yet, you think it necessary that the mass of mankind should believe these doctrines, to be true.

V. So necessary, that the earth would soon be depopulated without such a belief.

P. It appears then to be your opinion, that, a set of Politicians, and avaricious Priests, have most wickedly and presumptuously, contrived a system of false doctrines; and have palmed this system on the world, in the name of God himself, that they might thereby accomplish their wicked designs: and yet that this appears to be the only plan, whereby the world can be governed, or the happiness of mankind promoted. A race of rational creatures, who owe their existence to a Being of inflexible justice, of infinite power, wisdom and goodness, can exist only by the operation of a system of unparalleled fraud and falshood. This statement is indeeed astonishing to

me; and I would be glad to be informed, why men can be better governed, or more easily managed by falshood than by truth. What dreadful condition have men fallen into, which can render deception so salutary and necessary?

V. Man, sir, has been deluded, by superstitious notions, and the voice of reason has been suppressed.

P. And is there no relief for him, in this unfortunate condition? If a felm has been drawn over his eyes, why should it not be instantly removed? If light is what he wants, in the name of humanity, let him have light. Or, if there is danger apprehended from a sudden blaze; if it is thought that an immediate transition from darkness to light, might be prejudicial to the organs of perception; remove the felm imperceptably, and let him have light, as he may be found able to bear it: but never hope to cure him, by the operation of the cause which made him blind. If the system of Priestcraft has blinded his eyes, let him discover the imposition and be happy.

V. I am persuaded, sir, that were reason disengaged from the superstitious notions, which have been deeply stamped on the minds of men, by what is called a religious education; a principle step would be taken towards the attainment of human felicity.

P. And yet you are an advocate for the continuance of religious instruction; the native tendancy of which is to strengthen and confirm what you call superstitious notions, those clogs of reason, and the insuperable barriers to human happiness.

V. Well sir, I contend no longer; for I confess I have felt considerably hampered, in my attempt to plead the cause of the Clergy. Let them be put to silence.

P. But, my dear sir, you cannot have forgotten what are to be the consequences of such a step. Would you have the human race exterminated.

V. I fear sir, this would be the fatal issue, were they let lose from the restraints imposed on them, by their superstitious notions: but there seems to be no help for them; and

perhaps they had better not exist, than be so intolerably deluded.

P. But you have not yet imformed me, why man, in his present condition, is so incapable of deriving any advantage from the truth. It appears to me you will be under the necessity of subscribing to, at least, one doctrine of revelation, I mean *human depravity*.

V. I would be very sorry to subscribe to that gloomy doctrine. No sir, I entertain a more favorable opinion of my fellow creatures. Were men weighed in an equal balance, their good actions, I am persuaded would more than counterbalance the bad: and their hearts we must charitably suppose, are much better than their actions.

P. And yet, you are pursuaded that men with these very good hearts, would massacree one another, were they not restrained by false notions, respecting a future state of rewards & punishments; still therefore, I am under the necessity of repeating my inquiry: What is the reason that the creature, with so good a heart, and so well disposed, can be lead only in the dark? I would certainly have concluded, that the man who is restrained from acts of violence, only by the fear of future punishment, must possess a bad heart; he must be depraved.

V. I cannot consent to call it by so harsh a name, as *depravity*. I must confess however, that were the doctrines of the Bible generally discredited, I fear, few men would be able to confide even in a brother. The perpetration of enormous crimes would soon become common. For this reason I have, of late, thought it prudent to keep my sentiments, on these subjects, pretty much to myself.

P. In this you are certainly right. By all means conceal your discoveries: trust them not with your nearest friend. To divulge them, you know, would be to '*cast fire brands, arrows and death.*' But, as we have at length agreed in one thing, perhaps we can agree further. It appears to me, Vivax, that were I of your opinion respecting the condition of the human race; did I believe that thousands were already deceiv-

ed and ruined; did I view them daily sinking into deeper distress and delusion, without the most distant prospect of relief: with the small degree of philanthropy I possess, I should be a very unhappy man. But perhaps with your other important discoveries, you have found out some plan, whereby the evils we lament in the present state, will be removed. Perhaps you have been enabled to anticipate the bliss of a future state of existance, where neither error nor vice, nor misery shall ever enter.

V. No sir, to be candid, I cannot pretend to any such discovery. My prospects have been limited to the present world, and my happiest moments have been those, in which my mind has been entirely occupied by temporal concerns; without a single thought of death, or what may possibly happen to man after death.

P. You have sometimes, however, reflected seriously on those important subjects. May I be permitted to inquire what your future prospects are, in the hour of serious reflection?

V. You know, Paulinus, that the opinions of Philosophers, respecting a future state, have been very various and fluctuating. And notwithstanding the important discoveries, which some of them pretend to have made; their most plausible conjectures are involved in such darkness and uncertainty, that after many attempts to confide in them; my mind has found no relief from fearful fore-bodings respecting a future state of retribution. Nay, the oftener I reflect seriously on the subject, the more gloomy is the prospect, as it respects mankind in general; and the more terrifying with respect to myself. And, I suppose you will believe me, when I assure you that this is the greatest objection I have to your favorite preachers; they never fail to lead my mind into a train of the most gloomy ideas respecting a future state.

P. Were I persuaded, Vivax, that preachers are the kind of men you have represented them, I cannot suppose that any

story they could fabricate, would have much influence with me. You speak of them as impostors, and yet feel under their their discourses, as though you believed them to be vested with all the authority to which they lay claim.

V. In spite of all my efforts to discredit their doctrines, and to hear them with a callous heart; their words will press upon my mind with irrisistable energy. Perhaps this may be the effect of a religious education. I fear, I shall never obtain an entire freedom, from the influence of certain notions, which I imbibed almost with my mother's milk; respecting good and evil, heaven and hell, &c.

P. You are not absolutely certain then, that the statements made to you in early life, on these important subjects, were false.

V. This certainty, sir, is what I have long sought in vain: were I possessed of this, I could bid defiance to any preacher; but in my present wandering condition, the weakest of them sometimes alarm me exceedingly.

P. And yet, in this state of uncertainty, have you not professed yourself an established unbeliever? Have you not attempted to make proselytes to infidelity, as well as to infuse prejudices into the minds of many against the scriptures, and those who explain them?

V. All this I have done; and now confess my guilt in so doing: but whether it will serve to extenuate the offence, or not, I must observe, that these things were often done, as I may say, in self defence. Had I been unmolested by the Bible and its friends, I believe I would not have molested them—as they interrupted my peace, the only weapons in my possession were used, to repel the injury, and procure ease for a troubled mind.

P. What! do you talk of a troubled mind Vivax? Many have supposed, that you unbelievers, were the happiest mortals on earth: and that it was impossible that any one, free from the influence of priestcraft, and Bible prejudices, should be troubled like other men.

V. And we, sir, have uniformly endeavored, to give currency to this false opinion.

P. And yet, you have declaimed loudly against hypocrisy, and every species of insincerity, as the most hateful of all human vices, and, as if they were confined to professors of religion.

V. Yes, but were the truth known, I fear, more hypocrites would be found among professed infidels, than within the pale of the visible church, in proportion to the number of professors, belonging to each of these bodies. Be assured, my friend, it is a difficult thing for a man who *thinks*, to become an established infidel.

P. So I have always thought. But why should any man dissemble here? Hypocricy, among professors of religion, is a base crime, which, when detected, is justly abhorred: but of all hypocrites, he certainly deserves to be most despised, who pretends to be more wicked than he really is. But perhaps you are unfortunately singular; and others may have obtained that firm persuasion of the truth of their principles, of which you are yet destitute.

V. Ah! Paulinus, you are happily unacquainted with the many fearful forebodings, that necessarily prey upon the minds of unbelievers, I grant, you may meet with many professed infidels, who appear to entertain no doubts upon the subject; but such men are either hypocritical pretenders, or creatures that never think. The larger number of professed infidels, are of the latter description—Rakes and libertines; store-boys, apprentices, and half-thinking young attorneys; whose researches have never extended beyond a *pamphlet*, or a newspaper publication, may be undisturbed by the difficulties which lie in the way of all systems of infidelity. You may believe them, when they tell you, they have no doubts or fears respecting the subject: they have never examined it; perhaps they never will be capable of examining it, until a change takes place in the structure of their intellectual faculties.—And, with respect to men of erudition, it is only necssary to

look into their writings, to discover the marks of prejudice, of a malignant temper, of pride and impatience of control; but rarely will you find a passage that will induce you to believe that its author possessed unshaken confidence in his own doctrines. Notwithstanding my great partiality for these authors, I must confess, I have often been tempted to believe that they wrote, not with the benevolent design of delivering mankind from error, but with a view to convince themselves, that the cause they had espoused, was defensible.

P. That a man should teach others, with a view to convince himself, that the doctrines he inculcates are true, is preposterous enough. Had you known that Eusebius, and other preachers who have so often interrupted your repose, were only preaching to produce conviction in their own minds, you would doubtless have considered them despicable guides.

V. Yes sir, and despicable blind hypocritical guides are the apostles of infidelity, as I have found to my cost.

P. But, to return to the subject you first mentioned, from what text did Eusebius entertain his audience to-day?

V. My recollection will not enable me to give you the words of the text. The object of the preacher, was to describe the future inheritance of the saints; and to confirm their hope, that in due time, they should possess this inheritance. In the prosecution of his plan, the scriptures were his guide. He spoke of heaven, and the rapturous joys of the mingled throng, of saints and angels, who surround the throne of God, as though he had just descended from that glorious assembly. He spoke of exceeding great and precious promises, made to believers, not as if he suspected them to be cunningly devised fables; but manifesting the strongest assurance, that the God of truth had made these promises and confirmed them by his oath; and that they had been sealed by the blood of his only begotten Son: and hence it was inferred, that they were calculated to afford strong consolation to those who fly for refuge to the hope of the gospel. I confess the sermon hath made a deep impression on my mind. What a fool have I

been to suppose, that Christians were rendered unhappy by their religion. When I now compare the Christian's prospects, with the frigid system of infidelity, and the thick darkness and despair, in which this system leaves its advocates, in the time of trial—in the hour of death—I blush and am thunderstruck. Alas ! that I should ever have opposed the glorious doctrines of the grace of God ; and endeavored to establish in their room, doctrines of unparalleled stupidity, presumption and wickedness.

P. I rejoice unfeignedly, my friend, at the change which has so unexpectedly taken place in your sentiments. I hope, that after a careful, candid examination, you will not hesitate to subscribe to the peculiar doctrines of christianity, which you have hitherto so strenuously opposed ; and that you will find in the gospel, a remedy for the evils which you have seen, and lamented ; but for which you were ready to conclude, no remedy could be found.

V. As for the doctrines of the Bible, sir, I have acted towards them, as most of my deluded brethren have acted. I have opposed them without knowing what they were ; always taking care to view them through a wrong medium. All the distinct knowledge I have had of the Bible, amounted to this, It condemned me to endless misery as an inexcusable sinner. And with respect to the prospect of relief from the deplorable condition in which sin has placed us ; I am now so far persuaded of the sufficiency of the gospel plan, that my earnest prayer to God is, 'Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.'——The sun now disappeared and the dialogue ended.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE VIRGINIA RELIGIOUS MAGAZINE.

GENTLEMEN,

Some time ago I had the opportunity of perusing the celebrated Bryant's "Observations upon the plagues of Egypt." *I endeavoured to compress the substance of this work into a small compass for the benefit of a friend with whom I then corresponded. Perusing these letters not long since, it occured to me that, as Mr. Bryant's Book is very little known in this part of the country, they would make one or two, not unuseful numbers for your Magazine.*

Yours, &c. *P.*

November 26th, 1801.

I HAVE lately perused a little volume from which I have derived much useful information, and much rational enjoyment. I wish you to participate with me. The acquisition of useful knowledge affords a pleasure more noble, and more highly exalted than all those amusements, which are so eagerly sought in the giddy circles of dissipation. I congratulate you, that at an early age you have been taught to seek those pleasures, which leave nothing behind them; and especially that you are anxious to understand the Scriptures, "which are able to make you wise unto salvation."

The book which I have lately read is entitled "*Observations upon the plagues inflicted upon the Egyptians.*" The subject is treated with much ability; and I think that much light is thrown upon the part of Scripture, containing the account of these dispensations of Providence.

People commonly consider these plagues merely as awful judgments from the hand of God, intended for the purpose of compelling Pharoah to 'let the children of Israel go.' But had this been the only object, the Almighty could have easily inclined him at once to permit them to depart. Others go

a step farther, and suppose that the Lord intended, not only to rescue his chosen people from the Egyptian yoke, but also to manifest his mighty power, and prove that he was the only wise and true God. The author of these observations, however, thinks, that in every plague there was a peculiar meaning and significancy, and that each of them was aimed at some idolatrous custom which the God of Israel intend to reprove and to punish. I design in as short a compass as possible to give you the reasons for this opinion. The plague first recorded is that of the river Nile turned into blood. This would have been an awful event to any nation: but it was peculiarly so to the Egyptians. Many ancient people were in the habit of paying religious worship to rivers; as the Medes, the Parthians, the Sarmatians, the Grecians, &c. but none carried their reverence to a height so extravagant as the Egyptians. Their river was their chief national God, and they commonly addressed it with the appellation of Father or Savior. There was therefore great suitability in the judgment brought upon this people by the instrumentality of Moses. They must have felt the utmost horror and astonishment, when they beheld their sacred stream thus polluted; the divinity which they worshipped thus changed. This might also serve as a warning to the Israelites not to fall into this species of idolatry.

But farther, the Almighty might have polluted the river in various ways, and thus put to shame these idolators: but he chose to turn it into blood. The Egyptians, and their Priests in particular, were remarkably nice in their external appearance, and had the greatest abhorrence for blood; by the least stain of gore they thought themselves deeply polluted. The priests were, on this account, making continual ablutions. Twice every day, and twice every night they were obliged by law to bathe in their sacred stream. Accidents would cause them to repeat these washings much oftener. The evil, then, must have been severely felt, because, "There was blood in all the land of Egypt." This judgement was therefore directed

against the abominable idolatries, and superstitious rites of these people,*

* In order to make what has been said respecting this plague more intelligible to common readers, it may be proper to make some observations relative to the river Nile. It is observed in the remarks on the seventh plague that there is no rain in Egypt. To other countries this circumstance would be totally ruinous. But the want of rain is amply compensated by the overflowing of the Nile. The face of the country is very level, and the water overspreads it to a vast distance. The ground is thus effectually watered; and upon the falling of the river, a rich mud is left behind, in which the grain is sown, and from which it springs up with surprising quickness. The fertility of the land is so great, that Egypt has been called the granary of the world. This is owing wholly to the Nile; and hence arose the foolish custom of paying religious homage to the river. In some seasons the river does not rise high enough; and in others it rises too high. In either case the consequences are very destructive. This brobably caused this besotted people to be much more attentive to the sacred stream than otherwise they would have been. The cause of the annual overflowing of the Nile, though long thought to be an undiscoverable secret, is now perfectly ascertained. The source of the river is at a great distance from Egypt, in the interior of Africa: and though there is no rain in Egypt, it falls abundantly about the sources of the Nile. The climate in that country is just such as it is in the East-Indies, where the only dictinction of seasons is into wet and dry. For nearly six months every year there is almost a perpetual deluge of water poured upon the earth. The sources of the Nile receives these torrents; which all united into one mighty stream flow down and cover the land of Egypt. The country looks like a sea, with numerous cities and villages interspersed. During this overflow the people pay visits, and pass from place to place in boats, kept for this purpose.

The sacred history informs us, that 'the fish in the river died, and the river stank.' There was something more in this punishment than merely the stench of putred fish; although this was particularly loathsome to the Egyptians, who had such an abhorrence to all animal corruption. Not only the river, but even the fish, which lived in it were esteemed sacred. The priests would never taste fish on account of their imputed sanctity. The punishment then was just suited to their crime. How must they have been confounded, and terrified to see the river which they worshipped, thus polluted, their land defiled, and themselves almost poisoned by their stinking Deities.

The Egyptians were hereby taught that the Gods whom they worshipped were no Gods. This plague reached to the land of Goshan, that the Israelites might be warned to avoid the idolatrous practices of the Egyptians. And this was more proper, because in the neighborhood of Canaan, whither the Israelites were going, fish Deities were worshipped. The Dagon of the Philistines was one of these. This worship extended through Syria, and was in use in the borders of Lebanon, at Ascalon, at Ashdod, and at Joppa. It was intended, therefore, that the Israelites should be disgusted with such idolatry, that they might not fall into it, when settled in the land which the Lord should give them.

The second plague was that of the Frogs. Concerning this, it is unnecessary to make many observations. By reading the account in Exodus you will find that the frogs filled the river, and covered all the land of Egypt. This evil, like the former arose from their sacred river, in which they confided, and of the sanctity of which they had so high an opinion. Both the stream and the temples were polluted and disgraced, to the confusion of the priests, and no one could cleanse himself from the corruption. Besides this, the frog was considered as a sacred emblem of a Deity worshipped among the Egyptians, and a further intention of this plague was to give the people a disgust to those false Deities which they so blindly worshipped.

The third plague was that of the Lice. It has been already remarked, that the Egyptians affected great external purity, and were very nice in their persons and clothing. Uncommon care was taken that they might not harbour vermin of any kind. For this purpose the priests never wore any but linen garments. For the same reason, as an old historian informs us, they shaved their heads and bodies every third day. Many other circumstances might be mentioned to show in what abhorrence the Egyptians held these vermin, and with what care they were avoided. The essentials of their religion were placed in cleanliness. They made a great show of delicacy to the world; but in their temples, the most filthy, and abominable actions were daily committed. The most unnatural practices were carried on by their priests in the very shrines of their holy places. This judgement was therefore extremely proper. It was a suitable punishment upon them for making a great show of external purity, when, in truth, they were the filthiest of mankind. The priests and magicians were sensible of this; and the punishments was so well directed that they were constrained to exclaim 'This is the finger of God.'

The fourth plague was the plague of flies. The flies which came upon the Egyptians were formidable, both on account of their number, and the smart of their stings.* It appears,

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* In the countries bordering upon Egypt, in Ethiopia, Nubia, &c. there appears at particular seasons a species of fly, called by the natives *Zimb*, a little larger than a bee; the buzzing of which, as soon as heard, excites in all the beasts of the country, the most dreadful terror; and they run wildly about until they die worn out with fatigue and hunger. The puncture of this fly raises a kind of humour, which inflames and putrifies, to the certain destruction of the cattle. Nothing can stand before them; when they appear, troops of elephants and all the wild beasts of Africa, are seen running in every direction, showing every sign of the greatest horror, and dis-

from ancient history, that many nations, and among these the Egyptians worshipped particular Deities, which, as they supposed, defended them against particular evils. Thus some defended the people from fevers, and others from fear; some from birds, and others from flies. Among the nations descended from the Egyptians, there were many Gods whose province it was to drive away flies. It is, then, highly probable that the Egyptians had such Deities too. But this was not all. They actually worshipped a fly. Baalzebub was one of these *Fly Gods*. The propriety, therefore, of punishing the Egyptians by such a plague is evident. And it is not to be supposed that the punishment was not grievious. Several instances are upon record of places rendered uninhabitable by flies. It may be remarked here that the children of Israel were sufferers, in the three former plagues. This might have been done for two purposes. The one to give the Israelites a disgust to the objects of Egyptian worship, the other to convince them that there was no illusion in these wonderful events. In the following plagues the Egyptians suffered alone; lest they should suppose that there was nothing particular in these judgments, and so refuse to let the children of Israel go.

The fifth plague was the murrain of beasts. The peculiar propriety of inflicting this judgment upon the Egyptians will be plainly seen, when it is known that this besotted people regarded with religious veneration the lion, wolf, dog, camel, ass, cow, cat, ape, and goat. Bulls and heifers were maintained in their temples, and worshipped as Deities. But the murrain swept away these Gods that lived upon grass and hay, and taught the Egyptians that the God of Israel was the only true God.

The sixth plague was that of boils and blains. This like the others that preceded was particularly calculated to con-

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may. The only remedy is to fly to the sandy deserts, where the fly never comes.——These observations may show how formidable was the plague of flies.

found the Egyptians, and confirm the faith of the Israelites. The latter by being entirely exempt from it, might have their confidence in the God of their Fathers confirmed, while the impotence of the Egyptian Deities was strikingly manifested. Many of the Gods to whom they paid great reverence were supposed to preside over medicine. To these the people trusted in all their maladies. The physicians were commonly priests of the Gods of medicine, and pretended to cure the sick by their influence. It pleased God, therefore, to bring upon them a sore and grevious plague, which neither their Gods could cure nor their physicians alleviate. The Creator of the world might have punished these people by earthquakes, volcanoes, or terrible inundations; but these would not have been sufficiently significant. The plagues inflicted by the Almighty were intended not only to punish the Egyptians, but to show the baseness of their worship, and the foolishness of their confidence in those whom they trusted. There was something in the manner in which this plague was inflicted, which deserves notice. Moses and Aaron were commanded to take ashes of the furnace, and scatter them towards Heaven, that they might be wafted over the land. This command was highly significant. The furnace was a striking type of the bondage of the Israelites; and of all the miseries which they suffered in Egypt. This might convince the Egyptian tyrants that they were punished on account of the cruelties which they exercised on an innocent people. But farther, it was a custom among the inhabitants of Egypt, at particular seasons, to sacrifice *men* on a high altar: the Priests then collected the ashes and wafted them towards heaven, that wherever they fell a blessing might attend the people. In reproof of this horrid rite, Moses was commanded to scatter ashes towards the Heavens, that wherever the winds wafted them, they might prove a curse. The Supreme Being does all things in wisdom and righteousness.

The seventh plague, was that of rain, hail, and fire, attended with thunder. It is remarkable, that in Egypt there is no

rain, so that some of the ancient writers characterise it as a "country without showers." When therefore, Moses foretold, that on the following day, there should be a grieveous rain, attended with hail, and thunder, it was an event, of all others the most incredible to an Egyptian; and when it did take place, the Egyptians must have perceived themselves particularly aimed at in these fearful events so contrary to past experience. But farther still, these people were extremely superstitious, and greatly addicted to the observance of portentous appearances. Every uncommon circumstance was judged to be of this kind. But as these were imaginary portents, which arose merely from superstitious dread, it pleased God to punish them by some realities, to which they never were witnesses before. And the punishment by fire and water, was extremely proper, because the Egyptians were guilty of the grossest idolatry towards these elements. Under the character of Iris, they worshipped all fluids, and under that of Aieris, the contrary element. It was entirely proper then, that they should be punished by them.

In the history of this plague we are farther told that the flax and the barley were smitten. This circumstance may, to the ignorant, appear trifling, after the description of the terrible slaughter made upon men and cattle by the hail. But it really was an affair of great moment. The ruin of the flax was particularly distressing. It was before mentioned that the Egyptians above all nations affected external purity. On this account, the whole people wore linen garments. The country was particularly famed for the production of fine flax, from the manufacture of which other nations were supplied with linen, (see Prov. vii. 16—Ezek. xxvii. 7.) Hence the destruction of their flax must have been attended with great inconvenience, and must have proved a heavy loss: so that a judgment of this kind was more severely felt by the Egyptians than it would have been by any other nation, and by the priests more than by any other class of men. The ruin of the barley was equally injurious. They had few

vines in Egypt: instead, therefore, of the juice of the grape, they used "barley wine" which served them instead of water, in those seasons of the year when the Nile was turbid, and unfit to be drank. The destruction, then, of the hail, rain, and fire, must have been dreadfully ruinous.

I have now gone through seven of the Egyptian plagues. To enter upon the next, would extend this letter, already too long to a most *unconscionable* length. If health continues, you shall have the sequel in a few days. Adieu.

(To be concluded in our next.)

TO THE EDITORS OF THE VIRGINIA RELIGIOUS MAGAZINE.

THE mind that does not vibrate to the following delicate strokes of nature, must be divested of taste, or frozen to the feelings of humanity! The genuine effusions of the soul, rising in the language of compassion, should start the tear of pity, and awake the sympathetic glow of the heart!

The author of the Negro's Complaint, is the immortal author of the Task;—a writer whose correctness of taste, purity of sentiment, and sincerity of stile, have nearly won the laurel from modern poets. D.

THE NEGRO'S COMPLAINT.

1 Forc'd from home and all its pleasures,
Afric's coast I left forlorn;
To increase a strangers treasures,
O'er the raging billows borne:
Men from England bought and sold me,
Paid my price in paltry gold:
But though theirs they have enroll'd me,
Minds are never to be sold.

2 Still in thought, as free as ever,
What are England's rights I ask?
Me, from my delights to sever,
Me, to torture, me to task!
Fleecy locks and black complexion,
Cannot forfeit nature's claim;
Skins may differ, but affection
Dwells in white and black the same.

3 Why did all creating nature,
Make the plant for which we toil,
Sighs must fan it, tears must water,
Sweat of our's must dress the soil:
Think, ye monsters, iron-hearted,
Lolling at your jovial boards,
Think, how many blacks have smarted,
For the sweets your cane affords!

4 Is there, as ye sometimes tell us,
Is there one who reigns on high?
Has he bid you buy and sell us,
Speaking from his throne the sky?
Ask him, if your knotted scourges,
Matches, blood extorting screws,
Are the means, which duty urges,
Agents of his will to use!

5 Hark he answers, wild tornadoes,
Strawing yonder sea with wrecks;
Wasting towns, plantations, meadows,
Are the voice by which he speaks:
He forseeing what vexations,
Afric's sons should undergo,
Fix'd their tyrant's habitations,
Where his whirlwinds answer—no.

6 By our blood in Afric wasted,
Ere our necks received the chain,
By the miseries that we tasted
Crossing in your barks, the main,

By our suff'rings, since you brought us
To the man-degrading mart,
All sustain'd, with patience taught us,
Only by a broken heart.

Deem our nation brutes no longer,
Till some reason ye shall find,
Worthier of regard, and stronger
Than the color of our kind ;
Slaves of gold, whose sordid dealings,
Tarnish all your boasted powers ;
Prove that you have human feelings,
Ere you proudly question ours.

We have received several pieces for the Magazine, which cannot be published in this number, but shall in the next.

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